Interview with William D. Morgan

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

WILLIAM D. MORGAN

Interviewed by: Lester Elliot Sadlow

Initial interview date: June 23, 1995

Q: This is an interview with retired Consul General William D. Morgan by the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training [ADST] for the Foreign Affairs Oral History Program. The date is June 23, 1995. I am Lester Elliot Sadlow. Bill, we had an interview with you in 1988 which covered mostly your experience in consular affairs and your later assignments. What did your consular assignments begin with?

MORGAN: Beirut was the first sizable consular assignment. That was five years (1968-73), followed by overseas assignments in Paris (1978-81) and Montreal (1981-85), where I served as Consul General as well as Principal Officer in the latter. I had assignments in the Department in the Visa Office (1976-8) and as a Foreign Service Inspector (1975-6). I returned from Beirut to spend a year as chairman of the Consular Panel in the Board of Examiners of the Foreign Service (BEX) and the next year in Senior Training at Ft. McNair in the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF). I think that in the previous interview we covered all of these assignments because they were largely consular related.

Q: So in this interview we want to cover your entry into the Foreign Service prior to your assignment to Beirut in 1968. We will also go into your background. OK?

MORGAN: Right.

Q: Would you talk a little about where you were born and grew up and your educational background, leading up to your service in the U. S. Army.

MORGAN: I was born on November 10, 1925, and brought up in Rochester, New York. I guess that I had the usual life for that period—grammar school, high school, and then a thing called World War II came along. Before that, I think that it might be worth mentioning, for those who might not have experienced it, that we had a very serious economic depression in the United States in the 1930's. I remember living a good 15 years of my life, taking it for granted that I couldn't have certain things, because my father didn't have a job. I say that, just to throw a little real-life background into at this point.. I think that for those of us who lived through it the Great Depression became part of our upbringing—our history. I have often compared notes with others of my age group and have found that they all had similar experiences. It was a very unique and humbling experience and lasted for me into World War II, when I went into the U. S. Army. Basically, during the war everybody was all very much “gung ho” [to achieve victory]. I graduated from high school in 1943. It was expected, and I expected it of myself, that I would go into the military. It was a wonderful and uplifting feeling. Maybe it was naive, but I didn't think so. I didn't wait to be drafted.

I volunteered at 17, to go into the Army, into a program that was then very popular, called the Army Specialized Training Program [ASTP]. I went to Cornell University to study engineering. I was at Cornell for three months and the Army closed down the ASTP I was assigned to. For all practical purposes, in my view, the Army needed more cannon fodder. Incidentally, I had just turned 18, and became a real Army private.

I was sent off to basic training at Ft. Benning, Georgia, and then was assigned to the 87th Infantry Division stationed in Ft. Jackson S.C., which had served very briefly during World War I and was then deactivated. It was reactivated for World War II. It had a lot of southern officers and southern cadre, plus a lot of northern boys as infantrymen. We Yankees

joined the division at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. Here we were, welcomed by all of these White Rebels. Of course, racial integration of whites and blacks hadn't been thought of as yet, and this was quite an experience to be in the deep South at age 18. This was my first real encounter with black people—in the countryside, not in my immediate military ranks.. I don't think that I had ever seen a black person in my life, as I came from upstate New York. We went through further training at Jackson and then went into combat with the 87th.

But first we sailed to England to wait transfer to France and into the combat area. In November, 1944, we landed at Le Havre in Normandy, which had, of course, been secured by then. We crossed France in trucks and troop-trains (40 and 8s from World War I) and on, to Eastern France. The 87th entered combat in Metz. The Germans were still holding on to a fortress there. Let me pause there and see whether you want to steer me in a different direction. Otherwise, I'll be telling you war stories.

Q: Well, tell us one of them.

MORGAN: Well, I just discovered a couple of months ago a 40-page document that I wrote at the end of the war. I didn't remember that I had written it. I now teach Language Arts (English composition) to fourth grade students as a volunteer. I was looking for some souvenirs from World War II for some show-and-tell and came across the text.. I had been giving these kids background on World War II as part of the 50th anniversary of VE-Day. Talk about history, this was real-life history. That recaptured my days in combat in the 87th Infantry Division. My class used the paper as their “source material”. I wouldn't be able to answer your question as accurately if it weren't for that “refresher”.

". . . one good story” is one night when were in combat, heavy combat. To set the scene, the period I'm talking about was from late November, 1944, until New Year's Day, 1945, when I was wounded. We were on the Siegfried Line between France and Germany near the Luxembourg border and in the Battle of the Bulge. I rejoined the division, which

was then at the Koblenz River. We crossed that, then the Rhine River, and went on to Czechoslovakia, where we were located when the war ended.

The actual fighting in late November 1944, was the hardest days of the war. I was then a radio operator in Company B and only about the fourth or fifth day into combat. We were fighting face to face with Germans. We lost about one-third of our Company killed and wounded, maybe more. It was the first time that I ever witnessed that kind of death.

We were in our shallow fresh-dug slit-trenches, our foxholes, in a little forest called “Peanut Woods.” Most of us had fallen asleep from exhaustion. We were supposed to take turns at guard duty, but I think that most of us were asleep. A special detachment of German SS troops, or whatever they were, came through our area. They were really good troops. They fired about two feet above the ground to make us feel more secure below the fire-line, while others attacked with bayonets. This was a clever tactic. We hunkered down in our foxholes, thinking we were safe below the level of bullets. Many were bayoneted by the attacking Germans. But that's enough of World War II. Let's get on to “life in the Foreign Service”.

Q: Was your wartime experience your first time abroad?

MORGAN: Yes, other than in Canada. Rochester, NY, is on the border with Canada.

Q: Then you returned to the U. S. in 1945?

MORGAN: I returned in July, 1945. Ours was the very first division to arrive home after the end of the war. We came home on the USS United States,, which had been outfitted as a new ship to serve as a troop ship. When we arrived in New York harbor—in sight of the Statue of Liberty—the commanding general of the division ordered us all down below. Somehow, his idea of what to do was to get the troops off the deck. That was the first and only time we didn't obey orders. I couldn't imagine how you could arrive in New York harbor, with the fireboats sending up streams of water to welcome us—and here we were

ordered to go below. I have been a “revolting” person at various times during my career, and that was one of them. We weren't about to go below as we came home.

Q: After you returned to the U. S., when did you first become interested in the Foreign Service?

MORGAN: Well, not for a good four or five years. First, I went to the University of Rochester to get my bachelor's degree. I got home one week in January 1945, and during the following week I started in at the university. At first I lived at home but later moved into a fraternity house for the rest of the four years. I majored in French literature and graduated in 1949. I thought that I was going to teach French. I don't think that I even knew how to spell the words, “Foreign Service.” I certainly had no connection with it.

Then, fortunately, I began to learn some of the drawbacks to teaching. It wasn't that I was avoiding it, but I began to think, “Do I really want to be a teacher?” At about that time I visited Washington, DC, to see an old Army friend. His sister worked at the State Department, and she took me over to meet her boss. That's the real answer to your question as to how I first became interested in the Foreign Service. It was through this woman and her boss. I told him that I was going to get married as soon as I graduated and that then my wife and I were going to Paris. I wanted to get my master's degree at the Sorbonne—which I did. This man said, “Look, when you come back, come and see us.”

My wife and I returned (1950) after a year in Paris. She had gotten a job working for the ECA (Economic Cooperation Administration), the body set up to administer the Marshall Plan. She worked in the Hotel Talleyrand. Many years later (1978) I worked in that same building as Consul General. I had a couple of job offers as a teacher. I didn't think that they looked that good. One of the colleges that offered me a teaching job was Ripon College. I didn't even know where the college was. I certainly didn't think that I would be any good at teaching basketball, Spanish, and Latin. So my wife said, “Why don't you go and see your 'friend' at the State Department?” So I did. He offered me a job at the

State Department's New York Reception Center. I said, “Does this mean that I'll be going overseas?” We hadn't been back that long, and this was not something that I had thought that much about. He said, “No, this is a Civil Service job. Play it any way you want.”

So that got me to the New York Reception Center. The Wriston Program came along, and I took the examination for the Foreign Service. But this was after three or four years at the New York Reception Center.

Q: Can you explain the Wriston Program a little bit more?

MORGAN: I can't remember who Wriston was. I think he was the president of a university somewhere. He was commissioned, as I remember it, to do a study of the growing needs of the State Department. There were questions about the overseas operations of the Marshall Plan and where America's resources were needed and the role the U.S. should play in the world in its overseas programs. America had won a war but faced a new enemy. There were many things that our nation wanted and needed to do in various areas.

For example, the visa function, now involved refugees; alien influx was growing, and American presence overseas was growing. But we didn't have the resources to respond. First, we had had a very small Foreign Service before World War II. Secondly, World War II produced a reduction in the Service through the demand for military service alone. Most important of all, as I remember for the Wriston Commission, was the question of whether we needed and wanted the same kind of Foreign Service we had had. That is, did we want a service composed mainly of “elitist, Yale-oriented, Ivy League” type of people from East Coast families with money or did we want a service with a broader background? As I remember it, those were some of the considerations behind the recommendations that came to be called the Wriston Program.

Finally, the real answer to your question is, “Hey, we already have the people around that are already equipped. These are people who are in the Civil Service or who are just entering the State Department.” In other words, people like me. The final Wriston

recommendations were duly adopted by the State Department. I was told, for example, that I “had” to join the Foreign Service. Given my background and my record, I had demonstrated that I was at least somewhat equipped for the Foreign Service up to this point. The procedure under the Wriston Program simply involved an examination of my credentials and an oral interview. Applicants for Wristonization were not required to take a written examination. I was told, “Look, you can take the Foreign Service exam if you want to, but the examiners are coming to New York next week.” After the examiners considered me, I was informed that I was in the Foreign Service. Well, anyway, I took the exam, which took three days, more or less as a lark. I think that I passed it, though not with particularly high marks. I think my grade was in the 70's, which was another way of saying, “OK, you passed.”

My wife and I talked about it and thought, “Well, what do we have as a career future?” We were in our 20's. By then we had two children, born during our five years in New York. Obviously, we did have family considerations, but we decided to give the Foreign Service: a chance. There was also a feeling about the Foreign Service: it had “snobs” and was an “elitist” kind of organization, although I don't think that I had any lack of self-confidence. I wondered whether I could really compete with this “elitist” group in the Foreign Service.

The more I considered it, those people who came into the Foreign Service through the Wriston Program, as well as the “general intake” of people through the examination system, came from a much broader range of backgrounds than had previously been the case. There were a lot of opportunities facing us.

Q: After your acceptance in the Foreign Service what happened to you immediately?

MORGAN: You won't believe it. I got a call from Washington. I was told that I was being assigned to Paris. My wife went through the ceiling. She said, “We're joining the Foreign Service, aren't we? We just came from Paris. You're a French major. They're not going to

assign you to Paris." Well, I said, I had been fully accepted into the Foreign Service, and that was it.

Q: How did you feel about that assignment to Paris, since you had just returned from Paris?

MORGAN: I more or less felt the same way that my wife did. I thought that I would rather go to Africa, Tokyo, or some place else. My wife and I arrived in Paris as a just-married student couple. At the end of our first month there in 1949, we didn't have a penny in our pockets. We had just cashed our last Travelers Cheque for $10. She had no job. So we lived a student's life. You know, France was wonderful in 1949 and 1950. The French were not what they are today. They were really defeated. The country was in a state of chaos. They had lost a war, not only psychologically, but physically as well. But the Marshall Plan was operational and my wife got a job working for it — the ECA (Economic Community Assistance?). She made $2,500 a year, and that took us very nicely through the rest of that year and paid our way home. I think that we came out a couple of hundred dollars ahead and managed to travel all over Europe. I don't mean to say that hamburgers cost five cents, but things were easier to do then on such an income. My assignment as an FSO to Paris 1956, was a matter of going back to that world, in part. However, in those few years Paris had changed considerably. The country was certainly on its way up. It had benefitted a great deal from the Marshall Plan. My assignment was as Staff Aide to the Ambassador to USRO (United States delegation to Regional Organizations). These were NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization], OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development], and COCOM [Coordinating Committee of trade with Communist countries]. We had a number of ambassadors assigned to Paris in one capacity or another at the time. I think that there were seven of them in Paris at the time, including our Ambassador to France, of course.

Not far from where the American Embassy on the Place de la Concorde, is, was, and hopefully always will be, the Hotel Talleyrand. It is called a hotel — in French, a private

home for the rich — and was built at the end of the 18th century. It was named for Talleyrand, a subsequent owner who was then French Foreign Minister. It is a magnificent place. Ironically, my wife had worked on top floor for ECA in 1949-50. I was assigned there in 1956-8 to USRO, during my very first tour of duty in the Foreign Service. It was headed by Ambassador Burgess, a former Secretary of the Treasury. NATO Headquarters were in Paris then [1956], at the Palais de Chaillot, in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower. That is where all of the NATO meetings took place. I was the official liaison officer with the Secretariat of NATO. I only focused on the NATO part. There was another officer who handled [liaison] duties similar to mine with OECD. We had little to do with COCOM, a term you may never have heard of. Until very recently COCOM controlled trade with communist countries. But you were particularly concerned with our relations with NATO.

Q: Yes, let's talk about that.

MORGAN: The job I had was Staff Aide to Ambassador Burgess. As a lot of people know, whatever the Ambassador wants [his staff aide] to do, I did. More specifically, I more or less “managed his desk,” made sure that the right telegrams got there, and ensured that they were acted on. I did that sort of typical, secretarial work. I also had a job of liaison with the NATO secretariat, which kept me very close to the Secretary General and Executive Director of NATO, concerning meetings, agendas, and that sort of thing. I would then report back to the State Department. We had an office back in the Bureau of European Affairs in Washington which followed NATO affairs, OECD, and so on for USRO. This office gave us our instructions. The [NATO] agenda items covered an enormous range of subjects. They were military and political and often were very complex.

It was not at all unusual for the weekly meeting of the NAC, or North Atlantic Council, which was attended by the ambassadors of each member state of NATO, to cover 15 or 20 agenda items. Some of these were minor issues,, but others were of great consequence in our emerging military and political struggle with the U.S.S.R. Obviously, NATO was formed as a military organization, the North Atlantic Alliance, to combat the

threat as perceived from the growing Eastern European and Soviet military forces.. The military aspect of the alliance was the first and foremost consideration. Anyhow, agenda issues, for example, were the common standards of the caliber of the guns and the inter-operability" of weapons systems. NATO had a large, military staff. Our own Delegation was like an Embassy. It had Political, Economic, Administrative, and Military Sections. The Military Section was particularly large. Military matters usually accounted for a good part of the agenda at meetings of the NAC. Remember, of course, that the heart of the military element of NATO was SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Armed Forces Europe). NATO was the political, government-to-government base to whom the different Armed Forces ultimately reported.

Q: What about the size and composition of the USRO staff in terms of numbers?

MORGAN: The State Department element of USRO amounted to 40 or 50 employees. Our files were enormous, because we had NATO documents classified COSMIC, TOP SECRET, and lower, as well as our own U.S. similarly classified. Remember we were government bureaucracies. We had rooms filled with documents like that. As an anecdote of the things I did,, once I left two of these rooms open during a weekend when I'd been called in by the Ambassador when the Soviets invaded Hungary. I got a nice fist-full of "pink slips" [security violation reports] showing violations for that.

The Military Section probably had about 30 people. We also had representatives from the Treasury Department. Our OECD responsibilities were handled separately. However, we had economic issues with NATO. I even sat on the International Staff (of NATO) Budget Committee. There were a lot of financial issues that were dealt with by our Economic Section.

Remember, those were the days when NATO was mainly a security entity protecting Europe and North Americas. The United Nations had begun a few years earlier but really, in my mind, hadn't defined itself practically and certainly had to separate itself from military

alliances, although the UN Charter authorized them.. It hadn't gotten into some of the issues in which it is involved today. NATO was the major “power” organization.

Q: What about the internal situation in our Delegation to NATO?

MORGAN: Well, there are always personality and policy conflicts in any large organization. However, I must say that most people that I dealt with—that is to say, within the USRO Political and Administrative Sections—were very reasonable. They had a job to do. You really didn't think in terms of personality differences complicating what we were doing—fighting over “turf” and things like that. We had more than enough to do. We were there every night until 6:00, 7:00, or 8:00 PM, and often on weekends, constantly taking on the next issue. Bob Miller, for example, was a junior officer colleague in the Political Section. We remain good friends to this day. There was also John Stutesman. These people were all good friends.

The only issue which comes to mind where there were differences brings a smile to my face. This involved the military. I think that it was hard for our military to handle an assignment to what amounts to a diplomatic mission. I think that some of the colonels assigned to USRO tended to think that it was still World War II and that we were about to attack the Soviets, who, in many ways, were the new Nazi enemy. . Therefore, they had trouble appreciating some of the evolving—what shall we call them?—different approaches to issues which were emerging with the changes taking place in the Soviet Union. Stalin was no longer around, so it was no longer the “old” and as directly threatening militarily Soviet Union. The Soviets were scientifically becoming more significant and, most serious of all, had near or perceived nuclear parity. Also, I don't think that we had a person on that Delegation who really knew very much, first-hand, about the Soviet Union, and I wasn't one of them...yet.

Our military were also having a lot of bureaucratic trouble with these questions when translated to turf. I remember one officer who asked me one day, “Bill, I do not understand

the difference between the State Department's ranks and the military. Can you tell me whether I 'rank' that State guy or not? Now, I'm a lieutenant colonel, and he is a second secretary. How would you compare the two?" And I, being compulsively friendly — he was a fine colleague and friend — but probably not giving him the answer he wanted, said: "Actually, colonel, they are incomparable." He looked at me, laughed, and said: "I know what you mean." It was an attempt really to compare two historically different "families," if you will. Of course, this was soon after the end of World War II, and I still well remembered that I was a lowly enlisted man. It wasn't that long after a really wonderful, military victory. The soldiers were heroes, and these officers were heroes. The military were assigned to Paris in a diplomatic not military setting and all of what goes with it. It was often a case of trying to fight battles, if you will, when there wasn't any clear definition of the ground on which they were fighting. They were facing an "enemy", sometimes, who turned out to be fellow Americans. State Department people can be "arrogant," "difficult," taken with their own power or perceived authority at times. This could be difficult for our military colleagues to understand or tolerate.

I must say that most of the American military assigned to USRO were very skilled and professional at doing their jobs, although there was this little competition problem. Ambassador Burgess' rule, if there was any question about it, was to get rid of incompetent staff as he made clear when they left. But that is the only issue I can remember. I don't recall any other "personality: strains.

Q: Can you recall any specific instances where the diplomats opposed the military over a particular issue?

MORGAN: The short answer is, "No." The longer answer is that some things were rather "technical." For example, we had a discussion which probably continues to this day on what kind and size of airplanes NATO should have. What tactics should we have? Should Belgium or the UK do this, or that in using its air force assets?. There were questions like that. An example of a non-military one involved Iceland, which at the time had a

communist government or, rather, a coalition government in which the communists participated. Iceland was not permitted to attend the meetings of the North Atlantic Council. Of course, they received all of the documents. But I had to make sure that the Icelandic Delegation received no documents from our Delegation that were classified above, I think, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE, or something like that.

That's not really an answer to your question about issues that divided the State Department from the U. S. military. However, this is an example of some of the realities affecting what we were doing in NATO in those days.

I think that most of the “problem” issues involved the size of NATO forces, their status in the various host countries, and how much we could or should share with our allied, for example, in terms of our own military intelligence or classified documents. In other words, to what extent were the NATO countries really our allies and what U.S. laws limited our sharing of information? The French were our allies but, if you remember, about that time they pulled out of the military structure of NATO. They just said, “goodbye.” (or said goodbye to us!) This was after I left, but not too.

Q: As a matter of record, could you tell us who the members of NATO were at that time?

MORGAN: Gracious. There were 15 members. They included the United Kingdom, France, Canada, West Germany, Portugal, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, Turkey and Greece Because the last two were constantly squabbling over Cyprus, we were forever going to NAC meetings on Saturday (at least I remembering it interrupting my weekends) over the Cyprus conflict.

Q: Inside NATO, what was the perception of the Soviet threat during your time in USRO?

MORGAN: In NATO? The organization as a whole?

Q: Yes, and especially the U. S. Delegation.

MORGAN: Within NATO as a whole, the Soviet Union was perceived as a threat to the security of its members. That perception was part of an ongoing tension that continued until the fall of the Soviet Union. But still one nation perceives such tensions and threats differently. France, for example, looked at NATO as an ideological, Anglo-controlled entity. Germany saw the Soviet threat as directly on its border. Germany considered itself — most realistically — to be the potential battlefield. And it was. That's where the Warsaw Pact troops were amassed. That's where the battle lines were drawn. That's where the "trip wires" were. Norway and Turkey bordered directly territorially on the Soviet Union. Denmark and Greece bordered on the Soviet Union by water. Maybe that's the answer to your question. Those closer to the Soviet threat felt it with greater immediacy. Britain was always very sophisticated in its approach and was just getting over losing its empire.

Much of the answer to your question relates to the United States as the leading world power. We had the money, we had the forces, we had the resources and the will to face down the Soviets. Every one of the NATO countries, Canada included, had its own bilateral issues with the United States. Some of these were and perhaps always will be emotionally based:. Jealousy and envy. I've always considered foreign policy to be driven by emotional considerations — often cultural, and religious, and historical, but from the "heart and the gut". Britain, for example, was going through historic agonies at this time. There was the Suez crisis in 1956, following Egyptian nationalization of the Suez Canal. There was a perception in Britain that we were no longer their "friends," if you will, and could not be trusted as we were allies in World War II. Also, there was that feeling, and so much of this is feeling, that the British were dependent on us under the Marshall Plan, although they handled this matter very admirably—and most of the British were able to accept this. There was this feeling of "National pride," and it continued to manifest itself in NATO.

Now, we were together and were united in one particular cause: the defense of Western Europe and the tradition of Western Culture. But that didn't mean that other causes or

questions were not out there at the same time. There was a comparable feeling among the French, for example, it was called by the French the “Coca Colonizing” of France. Namely, the U.S. was in France to overwhelm French culture with American. In fact, we were — intentionally or not — proceeding to do this very thing, by example and strength and influence of our way of life.

All of those things were issues. Whenever the Soviets “behaved themselves,” so to speak, or at least didn't “bark out loud” in antagonistic attacks against us, these issues would come up. On the other hand, when the Hungarian Revolt of 1956 occurred that really brought NATO together, just as failing marriages are often brought back together by tragedy. That sort of thing focused the attention of the NATO members. Otherwise, we bickered. We had to do an awful lot of bilateral “fence mending.”

Then there was something else I would like to interject here which, to me, was very important. I remember about half way through my tour at USRO in Paris — and that would have been about 1957—a fellow by the name of Joe Wolf arrived. He was the new Political Counselor replacing Jack Tuthill. Joe was a very vigorous, driving, overwhelming, arrogant, and all of those wonderful words: a powerful, self-confident, intelligent FSO. He met with the Ambassador, of course, but eventually he met with the more junior officers, including myself and others in other parts of the Mission who were part of our Delegation to NATO. He made it clear that he was there for one, simple reason. The State Department and the President wanted a new definition for our NATO relationship. NATO had been founded as a military, security/defense organization, to confront the military threat posed by the Soviet Union. However, we had some internal differences, and there were the realities of an evolving Europe, and an evolving Soviet Union to consider. Now, when did Stalin die?

Q: 1953.

MORGAN: Right. So Stalin was already dead, but the Soviet Union still had not become a more open, less threatening society under Malenkov and then under Khrushchev. However, the Soviet threat was becoming more “political” and “ideological,” if you will. And the Soviets, of course, were extremely good in claiming bilaterally and in other relationships that they were just “one of the boys”; “ Peace loving,” as was their favorite word. They suggested that now that they had gotten rid of Stalin, things were much better and that the Soviet Union was no longer a threat. All of this was going on. So Joe Wolf said that he had come to USRO to present our new policy toward NATO. That is, in addition to being a strong, military alliance, NATO was also a political force and that our Delegation would take the lead and be part of expanding NATO's role as a political body. That would, for example, involve culture, anti-KGB (Soviet secret police) efforts such as using ballet performers as intelligence operators — such efforts would be more complex, sophisticated penetration of NATO efforts at resisting the communist thrusts at Western security and unity. The KGB was proving itself to be much more clever, politically. In other words, they were using forces as effective as arms and military threats. That was the significance of Joe Wolf's arrival message.

Q: You mean that Joe Wolf addressed such issues as infiltration as a communist “soft” invasion?

MORGAN: Yes, but I would say that he was more particularly addressing the issue of unity within NATO. He indicated that we should not “back away” from issues. We should “face up to them.” Avoiding political discussion within NATO would be dangerous. It would result in fulfilling Soviet ambitions to destroy NATO or at least weaken it from within. This could be prevented only through “political” unity or increased cooperation, understanding, and discussion. So then the agenda for the NAC meetings became much more “political.” We didn't have an “anti-KGB” section, but we did discuss what kind of relations we should have with the Soviet Union, because most of the NATO countries had bilateral relations with the Soviet Union. So there was an examination of some of the things that the Soviets

were doing and how we would react to them, how we could counter them, what we anticipated from them, and how we could defend ourselves as a group of countries. Really, NATO was the only practical, evolving, strong, Western group which could ensure that the Soviet and communist threat would not become a reality.

Q: Could you give us some concrete examples of the threat as perceived?

MORGAN: Yes. One of the best examples which sticks in my mind is the Soviet Army Chorus. What a threat they were! [Laughter] They sang loud and they were honorable members of the Red Army. But could we let them into our countries? This kind of question went on for many years—an artistic expression, if you will. Now, what other examples are there? The arts come first to mind, because the Soviets are very good in such fields. In fact, when I returned to the U. S. from Moscow—I'm jumping ahead a little bit—I was involved in negotiating cultural exchanges, such as film, theater (”Hello Dolly”), and other efforts of impresario Sol Hurok. This was about the only positive expression of the control of cultural exchanges. “Ideology” is probably the word that best describes this question]. There were issues involving the press, the concept of “disinformation” information deliberately falsified to serve a political purpose programs which the Soviets engaged in very successfully. The question was how the NATO countries as a group could react to such developments.

Q: How about our own efforts in the U. S. Delegation in engaging in propaganda?

MORGAN: Well, we had an Information Office, headed by a PAO, or Public Affairs Officer, with a staff, including press officers, and so on. I'm sure that they were fine and did their work. However, maybe they engaged in the more traditional, public affairs types of activities. They didn't engage in “propaganda,” per se. It was largely a press office. They had no “cultural” program at that time, except on a bilateral level in our embassy. But that was only involved in activities in France. At the same time, how proper would it be for us to be engaged in all of these things when we had an Embassy in each of our NATO countries

doing the same thing in a bilateral context? As I recall it, I remember issuing press notices to counter something which had appeared [in the media]. We would do something in consultation with our other information people.

NATO had an enormous and very effective information section. Our people would work with them. I guess that the real answer to your question is that NATO, of course, engaged in a lot of press activity, informing each country, in turn, through its own government, what NATO was and why we belonged to the organization. The question might be asked, why are we dumping all this money down a rat hole? We really didn't have that problem, because it wasn't a rat hole. “The enemy”, and its efforts were as clear as a bell. I don't remember that money was a problem for public affairs activities information. .

Q: How did you feel personally about the NATO presence in Europe and how did you perceive the threat of the Warsaw Pact in real terms?

MORGAN: This was probably affected by my age. I was young, at the time. Secondly, there was the fact of Soviet behavior. They were undoubtedly and measurably a threat. This was easily documented by their very actions constantly and consistently. The Soviet threat was also big—bigger than we thought, as we discovered. So I never personally gave the matter a second thought. I was sure that we were on the right track.

Q: Did anybody question it?

MORGAN: No. I don't think that anybody, to this day, has questioned it. One could argue that it really wasn't so much of a threat, especially now that the USSR and its allies have collapsed. I think that it actually was a threat at the time, though perhaps not as great as we thought. Certainly, we were right to evaluate their growing weaknesses, especially economic. In the late 1950s, when I was in USRO, the Soviet threat brought our allies together, after a very devastating war. It gave the United States a definably honorable role

to play. We had to be careful, however, about being the big, too strong partner—as we were, and at times acted as if we were.

However, there was so much contact with the NATO countries. American Congressmen traveled all over these countries. NATO was—and is—an alliance. It provided another, tangential prop or support to our world leadership role.. It helped us to assist a lot of other countries—Greece and Turkey, for example, on the Cyprus issue. Events in Iceland, Italy. Our activities in NATO gave strength to countries building on a democratic base. We were all forced, all the time, to remember that we were Western countries with a certain tradition which had just gone through, in some cases, a devastating war. Look what World War II did to Germany in that regard. NATO, OECD, and the Marshall Plan turned a severely damaged country around. This provided a means, a setting for them to get their stability, democratic institutions and honor back. It provided us a means to restore the French. In a negative sense, NATO gave France an opportunity to be French again—by kicking us all out! It permitted De Gaulle to be De Gaulle.

Q: Could you talk about some of the other delegations to NATO, your personal interaction with them, and your impressions of them.

MORGAN: Well, first and foremost is Great Britain. We tend to be looked at by many as their allies, or at least a country very close to them. This is based on a common language, background, and so forth. I think that I knew more of the people in the British Delegation [than in any other]. I think that we had the best relations with them, despite the Suez Crisis of 1956.

In terms of France, I had no particular reactions to the French whatsoever. I had virtually no contact with them at all. They were getting progressively more difficult and separated from NATO, at least the military part. .

Scandinavia. I went to high level NATO meetings attended by the presidents and prime ministers of all the countries. There were meetings of this kind, I think, twice a year—once

where the Heads of Government came. President Eisenhower represented the United States on one occasion. There were also regular meetings of foreign ministers. One of the foreign ministers' meetings was held in Copenhagen, which I had the great pleasure of attending. I had a great time. I hadn't been to Copenhagen before. It happened that I had worked with the Danish foreign minister, Per Hekkerup, who had come to New York as a grantee when I was assigned there. He had come to the U. S. under a leader exchange grant. Imagine, little me alone with the Foreign Minister, his wife and family, for the day at their small unpretentious home outside the capital. I have a lot of nice memories of dealing with the Norwegians and the Danes.

However, it was different with the Icelanders. I remember one time calling the Icelandic Delegation. They were considered to be “communists.” In that sense, I was in a somewhat false position. I remember the Icelandic Ambassador saying, “Oh, Mr. Morgan. It's good to hear you.” I said, “Well, you know, sir, I can't call you or speak to you.” He said, “I don't speak to you, either. It's OK.” So we went on. I had something important to tell him. He wasn't supposed to talk to me, nor I to him, but we had to talk. I can't remember what the issue was. However, there were those little memories of “impossible” situations solved by a nice ambassador on the other end of the phone.

The Italians. They were in a state of constant confusion. They were delightful people, but you never could get anything out of them. I'd call and try to get some information from the Italian Ambassador. I was never sure whether it was going to be correct or if the position was going to be undone by somebody else in the Delegation. I don't mean to be trivial about it. They were fine and wonderful colleagues, but I remember never being certain if the little piece of information that I had obtained from them would prove correct.

Most of the others I dealt with on business. For example, I was responsible for following all of the heads of government meetings—about security issues, passes, follow-up documents and so forth. I can remember stopping at the entrance to the Palais de Chaillot with President Eisenhower on one side of me and Secretary of State Dulles on the other.

We all had our identity badges hanging from our lapels, except President Eisenhower. The guard stopped him. He said, “You have to have a badge.” It was all very embarrassing to have the President of the United States stopped. Finally, they turned to me and said, “Mr. Morgan, will you authorize the President of the United States to come in?” I said, “Of course I will.” The President seemed somewhat annoyed. There were little things like that. I presume that you wanted me to make these remarks personal. Maybe they are not up to the higher level of your question.

Q: It's extraordinary that the guard would not let the President of the United States in. What did the President have to say about this?

MORGAN: He was furious with his staff aide because the staff aide had left the pass back at the Ambassador's residence.

Q: Let's go to some more “saucy” parts. You were in USRO from 1956 to 1958. The Warsaw Pact invaded Hungary in 1956. What happened inside the U. S. Delegation?

MORGAN: Well, it really was something. I received a phone call at home from the Ambassador, asking me to come into the office. He told me what had happened. There were just the two of us at the Delegation office for the rest of the day. He called me at around 11:00 AM, and we left there at 7:00 PM that night. I remember because the office was dark: that's how I got a security violation. During the day it had been nice and bright in the secure rooms. I didn't have to turn any lights on.

I remember the Ambassador talking over the phone many times in the course of the day to the Secretary General of NATO and to other ambassadors.

Q: Who was the Secretary General?

MORGAN: Lord Ismay, a retired British general. However, let's get everything in its proper —my— perspective. I spent most of the day running back and forth to the file room,

finding telegrams and looking up various things. We didn't talk to the State Department in Washington over the phone in those days the way we do today. Well, a lot of this stuff could not be discussed over the phone. Clearly, the Embassy communications people had been called in. Our USRO communications were handled at the Embassy. I would run back and forth to the Embassy to pick up telegrams and other communications and bring them back to our office. The regular telegraphic “take” was obviously coming in.

The substantive answer to your question of what the U. S. Delegation did in response to the Hungarian invasion is that we went through a period of incredible frustration on everybody's part. What could we do—what could NATO and the United States do? A lot of the answers to such questions we discussed at great length. What were the intentions of NATO and the United States? As I remember it, we didn't get any answers. “We”, was of course telegraphically between our embassies and the Department. But “we” were the Ambassador and I at times. We were there alone a great deal of the time. “I” was a sounding board, but it felt good.

However, I think that it was near the end of that day. The Ambassador was almost weeping in total frustration. We had the Political Counselor, Joe Wolf, in the office, as well as our Deputy Chief of Mission, Frederick E. (”Fritz”) Nolting. Other people drifted in and out of the office. I mostly remember the Ambassador and me. He wondered what we could do. Obviously, he wasn't asking me for real advice!.

Let's go back to a much more important question. What was really happening? What were the Soviets really doing? What were their intentions? What was the Hungarian reaction? What was the Hungarian Government doing? What were the forces involved? I remember calling in the senior military man in our Delegation and getting what you might expect from him. He said, “Sir, I don't know. I can tell you where our troops are. I can tell you where our forces are in Germany.” And that sums it up and I don't blame him. He gave what he knew..

I might be confusing my stories here, but it's not that important. I found out very soon—I don't know whether it was that day or very shortly thereafter, maybe the next day. The Ambassador said: “Well, the bottom line is, there is a country between us in NATO and Hungary. It's called Austria. The real question is whether we are prepared to invade Austria. Or, an equally serious question is, what are the Austrians prepared to do about it?” I don't remember factually what it was, but I seem to remember that the Austrians just said, “No.” If I remember my history correctly, they were still waiting to implement the peace treaty of 1955, the four-power agreement on Austria's position. That treaty provided that Austria was a neutral country and certainly not a member of NATO.

So it was not a simple matter of invading Hungary. How could you get to help whom and against whom?

Q: Do you remember considering an option to move military forces into Austria?

MORGAN: Oh, yes.

Q: Who would the players have been in that scenario?

MORGAN: I don't remember it all, but obviously that was an option. However, when you consider options like that, the decisions then are very clear—invasion. I think that the real answer to your question is that this whole question was resolved quickly. Or, somebody else might say, we “surrendered,” or the Soviets “won,” or whatever. As I remember it, the event was over with. The young Hungarians who climbed up on Soviet tanks were killed. I think that this happened at the end of that first day. It was all over. Then it became almost academic. You don't invade any place, any time. You don't invade under those circumstances, unless a war is going on, unless you are there to help or support a government or a very large force which had risen up in opposition to the Soviets.

Q: There also must have been a lot of confusion during that day, and then it ended before a major decision could have been taken.

MORGAN: Yes. You could use the word, “fortunately” in this connection.

Q: How did you feel about it?

MORGAN: At the time I felt very frustrated. What the hell do we have NATO for if we can't do something?

Q: How did you feel when it ended?

MORGAN: Well, I don't exactly remember. I probably felt relieved. That is a bureaucratic answer. I might have wondered how many more Sundays I would have to come into the office. More seriously, as I reflect back, this was all very disheartening. I didn't consider that it had been a “failure” of NATO. I think that it became a reality. Did we want to go to war with the Soviet Union? That was the bottom line question. Were the Soviets prepared? They were talking about atomic bombs flying back and forth. That has always been behind most “hand wringing” decisions over the past 35 or 40 years.

Q: Do you remember the reaction of the military people in our Delegation?

MORGAN: No, I don't remember. I don't remember any strain after the fact or any internal tensions. What were the odds? What were we dealing with? Also, there was a definition. Brezhnev, with his Doctrine, hadn't come into power yet in the Soviet Union. But there was a definition of what the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union was. The Hungarian uprising happened in “their” sphere. If the Soviets had come into Germany, it would have been very easy to answer the question of what to do. Or if they had gone into Greece. But they went into a country in “their” area. I hate to use the term, “sphere of influence.” I'm certainly not going to blame Presidents Roosevelt and Truman or anyone else. There

was a general agreement that things that happened on “that” side of the line were a Soviet responsibility.

Q: Well, certainly, Hungary was a Warsaw Pact country.

MORGAN: All right—there's the real answer to your question. It's as accurate as any other.

Q: How about the Suez crisis of 1956?

MORGAN: I arrived in Paris in June, 1956. If I was in Paris at the time, I don't remember any direct involvement in this matter. I remember very well the years involved to get the British and French...

Q: If you arrived after the Suez incident, you must have noticed the wedge that came between certain NATO countries.

MORGAN: Between us, on the one hand, and Britain and France on the other. I certainly remember the British and the French squawking like crazy about the “duplicitous” nature of the United States. They said that we couldn't be trusted, that we were a horrible country, and so forth. I don't remember any particular feeling within NATO. I went on to the United Kingdom for my next tour. There, of course, the memory of U. S. behavior at the time of the Suez Crisis lingered on. However, this usually came from the very conservative, older people who still resented Britain's losing her Empire. But there was no such feeling in NATO, that I recall. Maybe a few words here and there.

Q: Can you think of any other memorable experience during your time at USRO? Then you also worked for a time under Ambassador Amory Houghton?

MORGAN: The most memorable thing was that my wife and I found ourselves once more in Paris. This time we had two children. Our son was just a couple of months old, but our daughter went to kindergarten and first grade in Paris. That was a very happy experience.

We lived right on the Champ de Mars, under the Eiffel Tower. We had a little Dauphine car—our very first. We lived a very lovely, personal life. We had good friends, we did a lot of traveling around. My wife had friends in the American community. The French weren't terribly welcoming, but we learned that—or she learned it. Also, and far more important, it answered the question in her mind—and in the minds of many wives and mothers—as to whether children could get along in the Foreign Service. She had wondered what she could do, how she could live—especially in a country where what is spoken is not your first language, and things are “different.” Living under the Eiffel Tower was an aspect commented on by all kinds of friends and relatives. That was a very “plus” part of the assignment. Another “plus” part—and maybe you sensed this from my answers to your questions about NATO—was that the Ambassador and my colleagues were pleasant, professional people.

However, Mike Rives, who was Staff Aide to our Ambassador to France, Amory Houghton—a very distinguished, wonderful man—went on home leave. Then his father died, and he was gone from Paris for about three or four months. So I was designated to replace him, temporarily. I think that this was the “off” season in NATO, the “mois d'ao#t,” or the “month of August,” when most French take their vacations. We used to say that the biggest secret we had in NATO was that during the month of August, when everyone goes home, the Soviets could take over Western Europe if they set their mind to it.

That job was totally different from my job as Staff Aide to Ambassador Burgess in USRO. It was much more personal, more involved, and much more “traditional Foreign Service,” if you will. Amory Houghton was a wonderful man and a complete gentleman. He had been President of Corning Glass and Steuben Glass and all that. He was a very warm person—he trusted me with everything. Fortunately, Charlie Yost was the DCM — Deputy Chief of Mission, number two in the Embassy. When he was briefing me on my new duties, he said, “Remember, you will know more than anyone in this Embassy about that man. You will know more of his weaknesses. You will know more about things that you can't tell anybody, and you won't want to tell anybody.” Not that Amory Houghton was a “dirty old

man.” Yost said: “The hardest part of your job—and the most important part of your job—is learning the integrity you must show at all times being close to power.”

I did, indeed, learn this, but it was also a lot of fun. The job was an active one. I would have the French Foreign Minister on the phone. All kinds of things happened, if you want me to describe associations with powerful people. There was Ambassador Robert D. Murphy, who had previously been Consul General in Algiers prior to the Allied landings in North Africa in 1942 and who handled negotiations with the French looking toward an orderly Allied takeover of that area. But at the time we're talking about he was deeply involved in the negotiations with the French independence movement in North Africa, which he conducted from his base in Paris. He had an office around the corner from mine. He was “the” U.S. expert on French-North African affairs, and most respected. He went to the highest position in the Foreign Service: Career Ambassador. There were contacts of that kind in my job with Ambassador Houghton.

The NATO experience was interesting, involving the consideration of Soviet behavior and all of that. But there was a far more direct and personal relationship with Ambassador Houghton.

One day Ambassador Houghton buzzed me. I went in. He said, “I've got Secretary of State Dulles on the phone. I want you to hear this.” Often that is what staff aides did with Dulles: they transcribed what he said. You could be sure that he had somebody on the phone in the Department listening in and also taking notes.

The subject matter might have involved the Suez Canal or North Africa. I remember that it was a very important issue at the time. Ambassador Houghton said, “No, Foster! It's wrong, Foster. No, it won't work. I can tell you that it won't.” Then Ambassador Houghton said, after Dulles had said something, “OK, you're paid to be the boss.” The Ambassador hung up and said to me, “Who the hell is running the show around here? That railroad has

no one in charge of it." So you got these little, marvelous bits and pieces—unusual for an inexperienced officer.

The other story was far more personal, far more heartening. Ambassador Houghton had cancer of the larynx. He had had an operation for this condition before he came to Paris. He had a box-like affair in his throat. He would exhale air across it in his larynx. That was the way he spoke. He could talk, and it came out all right, but it was a very difficult process, and you obviously had to listen carefully. He had difficulty in talking, as he was blowing air. He had trained himself. Perhaps he had some other device to help him.

On every July 4 we had a routine. Every American Ambassador at the time did this. And I was associated with the routine when I returned as Consul General. You went to the grave of Lafayette, the great French leader who, in effect, "won" the American Revolution for us. The American Ambassador always made a speech on the occasion and deposited a wreath of flowers. The flag was displayed. This was a traditional event. You also had to bow a little bit to the Comte de Somebody, who was Lafayette's heir, supposedly. In my time he was a pompous jerk. The Ambassador asked me to draft a little speech on the occasion. He said, "I want it translated into French." The Ambassador took French lessons every day at the residence. At 6:00 AM every day, if I remember correctly, the French teacher arrived. As the great day approached, the Ambassador said, "I'm going to try to give the speech in French." So I translated it and then had a French speaker do a "real" translation. So the Ambassador had the English and the French versions when we got to the grave side—just he and I in his limo, flag flying—and maybe a military attach# to make the ceremony "look pretty."

I watched the Ambassador at the grave side. He reached into his right pocket, where he had the English version. He looked at it and then reached his hand into his left pocket and took out the French version. Then and there I choked up. I was on the verge of tears at the effort the Ambassador was making. He got about the first line out and then put it back in

his pocket. He had memorized the speech in French. That's a personal anecdote, but the memory of it stays with me clearly to this day.

Q: What was your interaction with the "locals" the French?

MORGAN: The "locals"—or Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs), as we call them today—are a very interesting subject. I talked a little bit about this in my previous interview. We had the World War II phenomenon with FSNs who were local employees of the Embassy or the Consulates—people who went to work, in many cases not particularly well trained. They perhaps did not speak English very well. After all, 1956 was only about 10 years after the end of World War II. A lot of the French "local" employees of our Embassy and Consulates were not very competent. I certainly have complete respect for "local" employees who were competent, and I could name them. However, an awful lot of them were getting "desperate." They were in their 50's. Some even recognized that they knew that they had probably exceeded their level of competence. They were going to "hang on" to their jobs for obvious reasons. So we did have some problems.

Now, as far as the Staff Aide to the Ambassador in Paris was concerned, there was no problem whatsoever, because the Staff Aide and the French "locals" get along, by definition. I knew that there were all kinds of things going on, and they reached me. Very properly, they formed a union, but it was very ineffective. I was involved in that. The Administrative Counselor and the DCM were obviously very much involved but I had a piece of the action..

The answer to your question is that this was the beginning of "troubled times." When I was in Paris as Consul General (1978-81), they were reaching their peak. Many of our local employees were then in their 60's and were being "encouraged" or forced to retire. I understand that the Foreign Service Nationals in our posts in Germany were in an even worse position than the French.

Q: For the record, can you explain what "Foreign Service National" means?

MORGAN: We used to call them "Foreign Service Local" employees. That was part of the problem. Understandably, they didn't like to be called "locals," which had a pejorative implication and was used at times in a pejorative sense. The "Foreign Service National," to use a politically more correct term, is usually a citizen of the nation where the post is located. He or she is hired by the American personnel officers and section chiefs to perform essentially clerical or secretarial, unclassified—from a security classification standpoint—functions. The jobs are usually labor intensive—in the Consular Section, for example. However, they have continuity. The FSNs stay on for many years. The American junior officers at the post come and go. The Ambassadors come and go. The Foreign Service National is simply "loaded" with knowledge. Sometimes, he or she has the wrong kind of knowledge. In Beirut, for example, they sometimes gave out misinformation, because egos were involved or there were conspiracies against certain groups, or whatever. So you could have a negative side to Foreign Service Nationals.

However, I would say that the positive side was first and foremost. They were loyal to the United States, with some exceptions. They sometimes were put in jail. However, I'm thinking of France. They were bureaucratic, but that word comes with the language.

In consular work we may have supervised them better. However, we certainly recognized that they were passive in their attitude. Also, remember well that they usually were in direct contact with the public. In the rest of the Embassy, this was not so much the case. Yes, there were receptionists in direct contact with the public. In the Political Section some of them went out and made contacts with certain political parties. For the most part the Administrative Section had the largest number of Foreign Service National employees—budget and fiscal, general services, and all that. They did mainly staff work, if you will.

About this time, or certainly in the 1960s, we reduced significantly the U.S. Foreign Service Staff corps in the Foreign Service. We now have, in consular work, for example, only

Foreign Service Officers. Foreign Service secretaries and communications experts are specialists in what continues as a Staff corps. However, a lot of the clerical work at our posts that was formerly done by the Staff Corps is now done by Foreign Service Nationals.

Q: What was special about NATO—your Paris assignment at the time of which we are speaking? What did you learn from it?

MORGAN: Well, hopefully, I learned how to be a Foreign Service Officer. I think that I learned more about the traditional Foreign Service, and from a very important vantage point in Embassy Paris. In USRO I learned a lot about international relations and politics and power. One of the most important things to learn in the Foreign Service is how to be around power—how to be around rank, privilege, snobbism. How to be around an awful lot of things that you were not necessarily taught at home. In French society you would be taught about them. Obviously, lots of Americans are very conversant with power and all that but who don't come from IBM (International Business Machines) and Amory Houghton's background, and the like. Now, that style of operation has to be done well and most professionally — and above all as a real representative of the United States. Every so often we “lost” a few people who “sank” into the local background, as occasionally happened, for example, at our Consulate in Nice France. Like associating with Grace Kelly, the Princess of Monaco, and David Niven and the glitterati. It goes to their head, if you will.

I think that my wife and I learned that right away. If you're standing next to the President of the United States, so what else is new? More importantly, you learn the techniques of how to get along—how one writes, organizes, defends oneself. If you can't talk on your feet, understand why the other person thinks the way he or she does—differently, because they are from a different culture, you're in trouble professionally. Somehow, you have to relate to those around you, and empathize with them. At the same time you must remember that you are there to protect your own country. Therefore, you're trying to learn how a different culture or political setting works, so that you can better defend your own country and better

explain your own society. Those are the American representatives who are the best. You know, there were 15 NATO countries and France by itself. You were exposed to a lot of very important, learning experiences. You also learn how to survive. I learned very, very quickly that good personal relationships are vital. You might be transferred to another post, but maybe that other person will come back and haunt you some day.

Q: After Paris you were transferred to the Consulate in Birmingham, England. How did the transfer come through and how did you hear about it? What was your reaction?

MORGAN: I guess it was normal, in the sense that this was the first time that I was ever transferred from one Foreign Service post to another. I think I had a telephone call from the Department ahead of time. We didn't have “bid lists” in those days. We weren't encumbered by that. As a matter of fact, it's kind of amusing to those who are interested in the subject. You arranged for a transfer by getting out the “Foreign Service List,” which lists those assigned to all posts and the date of their expected transfer to another post. You went through it, looking for a date of transfer at the kind of post you wanted to go to. I did that and selected the Consulate in Birmingham, among others. I thought that I would like a nice place, and my wife thought that she would like to go to a post where they spoke English.

In looking through the “Foreign Service List” I came across the name of a fellow that I knew. We had worked together some time in the State Department. His name was Dave Ortwein. Dave was due to leave Birmingham, England, at the very time that I was due for a transfer from Paris, after allowing for home leave. So I telephoned him and said, “Dave, what is your replacement's name?” He said, “Oh, I don't have one. Hey, you'd love it, Bill. It's great here. As a matter of fact, you'd probably like it better. My wife thinks it's terrible.” I said, “Look, how about my flying up there and seeing it?” He said, “Yeah, why don't you?” So, on my own, I paid my own way, flew up to Birmingham and looked the place over. Obviously, I had talked it over with my wife, who found the idea of Birmingham as our next assignment rather interesting. I told my personnel officer in the Department that I would

be interested in an assignment there. So we left it to the Consulate in Birmingham to put me in as a qualified replacement for Dave. You'll never guess what happened. I received orders in the mail, transferring me to Birmingham, England in 1958.

So, after we had home leave, we went by ship to Birmingham, England. I would call this manner of assignment rather “normal” for those days. You inquired into a place, asked a few questions, and put your name in the hopper. Now, of course, you have a process of “open bidding” for posts. You have a whole bunch of people applying for a job. You don't have to arrange things “independent” of the system. However, I think that the old way of handling assignments was better, and I suspect is a method still used in part.

Q: How much time did you have available? You said that you had home leave coming after your Paris assignment.

MORGAN: I think that I had two months of home leave.

Q: Where did you stay when you were on home leave?

MORGAN: That's always the problem when you go home. We stayed with our family. You discover very quickly that after people ask you a few questions, such as, “How was it in Paris?”—some 30 seconds to one minute later, they're “turned off.” They're no longer interested. We made a “Salade Nicoise,” a delightful salad, for my father and mother. They admitted that they didn't like anchovies. They thought that hard boiled eggs and lettuce made no sense whatsoever. So that ended our recollections of life in Paris, because people weren't really interested.

More importantly, how do you “divide” the time of four people? There were my wife and I and our two children.

Q: We'll want to come back to this matter again. Let's get back to Birmingham. Tell us a little bit about the history of the Consulate and the state in which you found it in 1958, when you arrived.

MORGAN: Birmingham was a “traditional” Consulate. It was a small post, with two officers assigned. It had about five Foreign Service Nationals. It was a “constituent post,” one of about six or seven under the Embassy in London. We had Consulates in Cardiff Wales, Southampton, Manchester, Birmingham, and Edinburgh Scotland, and Belfast, Northern Ireland.. However, in the “good old days” we had 20 or 30 Consulates in the U.K. As our readers know—and you do, too—consulates are opened for one or two basic reasons. One is to provide service to American citizens. The second reason is to protect American seamen and maritime commercial interests. That is in reverse order of importance. Our consulates were first opened in seaports. Then they grew into commercial and business oriented centers, supporting tourism, and so forth. Finally, after World War II, the issuance of and requirement for visas grew enormously. There were refugees and a general increase in non-immigrant visas. Our consulates grew and grew to perform such consular functions. They supported embassies in providing political, commercial, and economic information services and so on.

The Consulate in Birmingham had been there since the middle of the 19th century, if not earlier in that century. Birmingham is the second largest city in Great Britain. It was the heart of the “Midlands” of Great Britain, the heart of the commercial and industrial section of the country, which included Coventry, the automobile factories, and so on Real Charles Dickens stuff.

I would pause at this point and say that we “supported” the Embassy, but there was an understandable “competition” between the various Consulates and the Embassy. For example, reporting on automobiles—there we were near Coventry. Why didn't the Embassy ask us for some of the information needed? The reason is that there was an enormous Economic Section in the Embassy and we in consulates would not dare “step

on the toes” of the Economic Officers, who were trained in economics, whereas I was merely trained in the French language. So they tended to think that I couldn't begin to understand economic reporting. There was a sort of “competition” which I also noticed when I was Consul General in France between small Consulates and the Embassy. If an officer in a Consulate reported directly back to the Department without going through the Embassy, he would be in “trouble.” Good Consulate Officers knew enough not to do that.

But what kind of political reporting was there for us to do in the consulates, such as Birmingham? Did the Embassy “care” what the Lord Mayor of Birmingham was thinking as a center of local “power?” However, not everything was in London. There are centers of industrial, economic, financial, and business power in places like Birmingham. Did the Embassy want to hear from us? Oh, they thought it would be very nice if we had something to report. So this left us in somewhat of a quandary as to what to report. However, I might get a question over the phone. The Economic Counselor or an officer from the Political Section might call you and say that they understand that this and that and so and so. Could you look into it? We had general guidelines from the State Department and the Embassy about subjects to “keep our eyes on.”

I think I can give you one, marvelous, perhaps classic example. I would try out ideas on my first boss in Birmingham, but he spent most of his time preparing for his retirement. In fact, he dozed off at his desk for a good share of the day. He was a very nice man, but he seemed more interested in his social and home life. He left everything to me, which was agreeable to both of us. He said, “Yes” to almost everything that I suggested. I said to him one day, “You know, there is a series of articles in the local paper about social unrest in Birmingham. And in this area, traditionally the immigrants have over the decades come from poorer Ireland and often end up as bus drivers, cook and bottle washers, and do other 'staff' work. They are now being replaced by Jamaicans.” I said that, not only are the Irish troubled by this, but they're losing jobs. And there is the “black-white” problem. As I

came from a country which was a little more conversant with it than Great Britain, I sensed that there was something there to report on. My boss agreed.

So I went to see the Lord Mayor of Birmingham and did a lot of research on this. A number of social workers had done recent studies on it. I wrote a “masterful” airgram on this subject. In those days “Airgrams” were simply typed reports sent to the Department by diplomatic air pouch. This magnificent report went to the Department of State. It covered what I regarded as serious, social unrest in the Midlands of Great Britain. I cited sources and wasn't just making this up. I received a commendation back from the Department of State. You used to receive formal “evaluations” on your reports on a special form. A copy of this evaluation was placed in your personnel file. It said that this was one of the greatest reports—well constructed and well researched. The conclusion of the evaluation, however, was that the report was irrelevant to the Department of State. It stated that, “Since we are not involved in sociological studies, we have no use for your airgram at all.” As a matter of fact, I have been thinking of going down to the National Archives in Washington to see if it is still on file there!

We also received some telegrams by commercial channels. One day we received a telegram from the Department through commercial channels which was encoded. The telegram said that we had just landed somewhere or someone had just invaded us—something earthshaking like that. I spent hours decoding the damned telegram. By the time I finished this message, the newspapers on the street were announcing what the event was—we'd landed in Lebanon!

So that is how you get into political and economic reporting. I did reports on Coventry, on the tire industry, on banking, and on a lot of different things, but almost all of them were not “volunteer” reports like the big Airgram I wrote. These other reports were done at the request of the Embassy. They were fun to do. I would go out, meet people, and collect information.

All of that probably took about one-quarter of my time. I would say that about 50% of my time was spent on general management of the Consulate. As I said, my first boss tended to doze, so virtually all personnel issues and staff direction came to me. My second leader was a self-proclaimed reporting officer who disliked consular and administrative work. He did write well. I went to him one day and said, “You know, this Consulate is in a terrible location.” It was downtown, no parking and poor public access, crowded, and so on. We had a Foreign Service National doing commercial contact work. He had an office, my boss had an office, I had an office, and we had a big, well-lit open space where all the other Consulate FSNs worked and the reception area was located..

My boss said, “Yes, we should do something about it.” And the Department also said, “Yes.” Back in those days you frequently got “Yes's” from the Department of State when you asked for something. We were authorized to arrange to build a new Consulate. So I got out the Foreign Service Manual to find out how you build a new Consulate. I really started from scratch. The Department said, “Go ahead and arrange for it. You'll find instructions in Section So and So of the Foreign Service Manual.” And there the instructions were—pages and pages of them. I followed the instructions, with no real direction from anyone but with the encouragement of the Administrative Counselor in the Embassy in London.

There was a new building under construction in Birmingham—still on the drawing board. I learned about it from social contacts. The builder said that he would love to have the American Consulate in his new building. He said that he would give us this and that free. He asked us to give him an outline of what we wanted. So I literally did it—my very first building. I've been doing it ever since. It was a lot of fun. Four years later, the Consulate was closed, as it was considered no longer to be of any use to the United States Government!

I should come back to an over-all accounting for my time. That new consulate part was obviously part of the administrative segment — 50% of the overall. It obviously, went on for months.

The consular work accounted for a lot of our time. As a land-locked district we didn't have any work related to American seamen. I touched on the one case involving a seaman in my previous interview. We had a lot of visa work to do. In those days issuance of visitor's or student visas involved finger printing and detailed FBI examinations, etc. It was tedious, demeaning, and “by the book.” It was under the previous, McCarthy-era (McCarran-Walter Act of 1952], which was very restrictive. In the first place, any kind of “communist” association was grounds for refusal of the visa. Of course, there we were, in the “heartland” of communism in Great Britain. There were a lot of labor unions there and a lot of these “suspicious” socialist-type persons. We had all kinds of investigative tools.

Q: Did you have a Lookout List?

MORGAN: Oh, yes, it was terribly dated and didn't include a lot of people that it should have. So our investigations were mostly based on the questionnaire and the application that the visa applicants filled out. We did not issue immigrant visas. This was all done at the Embassy in London. We had British help of the highest order. Nothing was handled by mail. Every applicant had to be seen in person. I had to see them and put questions to them.

Q: What was your rank when you arrived?

MORGAN: When I arrived in Birmingham, I was Vice-Consul. My boss was the Consul and Principal Officer.

Q: For the record, who was your boss?

MORGAN: During the first year in Birmingham my boss was Harold Pease. I've called him a sleepy guy. Actually, he was a delightful person. His wife was equally charming and very helpful and supportive of my wife. Our families got along very well. Harold retired from the Foreign Service from Birmingham. He and his wife went back to California and he died shortly thereafter. They had one child, a daughter. This was a tragedy. She came into the Foreign Service as a secretary.. I got a phone call from the Pease's when we were back in Washington studying Russian. They said that their daughter was driving across the country and was killed in an automobile accident; she had planned to stay with us in the beginning. That was the end of their connection with the Foreign Service. I still keep in touch with Flora Pease. A true Foreign Service tale. My other boss in Birmingham died recently. He was a more active person. His name Ken Atkinson. He was much more active. Before his arrival I was promoted to Consul. You asked at lunch today how we handle promotions, titles and ranks. There were the positions of Consul and Vice-Consul —and I was promoted to Consul. Harold Pease was replaced by another Consul. I was the “number two” person at the Consulate and still in the vice-consul's position. But I had the title “Consul” on my visiting cards, once promoted by the State Department's Evaluation (Promotion) Panels. So, to confuse all our friends and officials , we had two “Consuls” at the Consulate.

Q: Your diplomatic rank was “Consul?”

MORGAN: No. If I had been in an Embassy, my diplomatic rank would have been Second Secretary. I was promoted to Consul while in Birmingham.

Q: And your position?

MORGAN: My position was that of vice-consul.

Q: So your personal rank was Consul, but your functional position was that of vice-consul.

MORGAN: Yes, because I was promoted to the rank of Consul. It was only of importance when you had your visiting cards printed!

Q: Could you tell me something about the people who were interested in coming to the United States?

MORGAN: During my two years in Birmingham there were only two visa applicants I really remember.. One of them simply made our Consulate staff fall apart. One of the young staff female employees came into my office, absolutely trembling. She said that Paul Anka, the singer, was outside. He was a Canadian. and needed a visa because he was overseas and going as a performer.

Q: The young women in the Consulate were all excited?

MORGAN: Yes. They were in their 20's and were all squeaking: Paul Anka! I didn't know who Paul Anka was, which was even worse! The other applicant was a very haughty industrial figure. He was very difficult to understand, given his heavy British accent. My secretary came in and whispered that he was absolutely impossible to deal with. He insisted talking to no one but me. I said, “Is he a commie or does he have something to tell me?” She said, “Oh, no, he just hates this.” And he had gone on with my consular clerk about the 1956 crisis over Suez and all of that sort of thing. I looked at the visa application and tried to ask a few very polite questions. His name was French: Beaulieu, which I pronounced in French. He roared up from his chair, lividly red, and reddening, screaming “My name is 'Buelee' ever since 1066 and all that!” Clearly I had mispronounced his name and given the French pronunciation most inexcusably. I had visions of my namesake, William the Conqueror, roaring up to my defense.. The other visa applications were quite routine!

I don't think that we had more than 10 applicants per day, if that. Our applicants consisted of businessmen, students, and women who had married GI's (World War II soldiers). An

awful lot of the GI's had married in Great Britain. I had served there for about two or three months before crossing over to Normandy, but I was too young to get amorously involved.

One of the most important social and semi-official jobs that I had was that I was Honorary President of the Transatlantic Brides' Association. Once every six months my wife and I were invited to their dinner, and I was expected to make a speech. I'm not sure that everybody understands what consular work can involve, sometimes. You get very close to the people!

Q: What was the purpose of that association?

MORGAN: That's a very good question. I think that the mothers of these brides tended to feel that they had “lost” their daughters who were now living in the United States. The mothers traveled to the U. S. for visits, and children were born, but they wanted a closer contact with America and those families of the same situation.. It was a friendly kind of association. It definitely promoted Anglo-American ties, in the very best sense of the word. The dinners were as “dull” as anything could possibly be. They put us up on shaky pedestal-type seats. The room was filled with mothers—and, perhaps, a few brides. There were children dancing in front of us in some sort of ballet in the middle of the room. My wife turned to me and said, “You couldn't wipe that silly grin off your face if you tried, could you?” And it was true. You had to keep a smile on your face all through the evening.

Q: That's a good lead-in to your contacts with the British people. How were they, and what kind of relationships did you develop?

MORGAN: My wife always felt that Birmingham was one of the happiest posts she ever served in. We had wonderful relationships with local people. There was no separation between “official” and “family” friends. The home we lived in was a huge, Victorian mansion. We lived in half of it. A delightful British couple, landlords, with two children lived in the other half. Their children were about the same age as ours. He was the Honorary Thai Consul in Birmingham. I don't know how he got the appointment; he was a

stockbroker. He was a marvelous and personal friend. This was the period after the Suez Crisis of 1956.

I remember that incredible, rude man who came for a visitor's visa, but most of the people were nothing like that. Remember that the Midlands of England is something like Quebec in Canada. The people are very friendly to Americans and appear to be very similar to us in terms of experience. They are hard working people—industry and business oriented. They are not like the people of southern England who are very “British” and very conservative. In the Midlands, anyone who was “haughty” was cut down very quickly by the realities of working in that area. Remember, this is Dickens' country, with a lot of social and housing problems. An American consular officer serving in Birmingham is very close to local officialdom. You know all the presidents of the banks, company presidents, and so forth. You deal with these people all of the time. You know the Lord Mayor of the city, the Papal representative, and all of that. There was only one other Consul in Birmingham—the French Consul. There were a number of honorary consuls, but the French Consul was the only other “career” consul.

Perhaps more importantly, from a personal standpoint, a lot of my official contacts were sources for things I wanted to know for political or economic reports I might want to “feed into the Embassy.” I could get reactions to specific developments. I could say to one of my contacts, “What do you think about this or that?” Down at the level of my age group, I knew a number of lawyers. One of them was determined to be a Member of Parliament and still is today — Tony Beaumont-Dark. He was about my age. Those people would talk to you. They would talk to you as friends—special kinds of friends. They would also “pick my brains,” if you will. It was a very warm and mutual relationship. Our children's school brought us into contact with another group of people. Almost every night we would be doing something social—and something that we liked and wanted to do.

Q: Like what, for example?

MORGAN: Dinners, receptions, cocktail parties, and picnics. I remember trying out a picnic on the Fourth of July. We had to cook inside, because that was the only place that we could build a fire. I think that the temperature was only 39 degrees (Fahrenheit)!. I think that it was close to what my wife and I had known in the United States. Relationships were certainly closer than they were in New York. Also, part of it came from our having “official” status. This was very satisfying, too. You got a lot of professional “feed back.” You knew whether you were doing all right.

Q: And your contacts with the Embassy—your promotion?

MORGAN: That was welcome, of course. It showed that I had done something right, I guess.But that was for my days in USRO.

Q: What were some of the drawbacks to serving in such a small Consulate?

MORGAN: None that come to mind. I say that in terms of our age and experience. It was our second assignment overseas. Our family was growing. We had the comfort of being in an English-speaking country. We didn't have that added challenge, if you will—or burden—of taking on, in some cases, an incomprehensible language, or one which was incomprehensible to some of us.

Q: What did your wife do while you were there?

MORGAN: She raised our children. She did some volunteer work at the local hospital. She was involved in school, because the children were in fourth grade and kindergarten. She had calls from the kindergarten principal, because our son was having a terrible time in class. He was in a class of 10 or 12 British kids. They had all decided to speak with an American accent, and our son was supposed to learn to speak with a British accent! The teacher was fighting this young American's contagious accent on the class.. We had

an Irish domestic servant to help us with the kids and housework.. She was more of a challenge than she was a help. That sounds like, “What do you do with the maids?”

My wife had a lot of friends. Among our friends were a Dutch couple. He was a director/ owner of C & A, a big department store. There were a lot of friends like that. People liked to be friendly, talk about relations between countries. They liked Americans in this part of England.

Q: It sounds as if one of the most valuable things you got out of your experience there was the construction of the new Consulate. That was your introduction to the way the Department operates. Can you expand on that a bit more?

MORGAN: Yes. I think that there were two things, which don't exist any more. There was this sense of power and, yes, the construction of the Consulate. It was all new to me. There was that feeling that no one was getting in my way. There was no one from FBO [Foreign Building Operations] coming out from Washington. There was nobody from the Embassy, telling me what to do. I was given, I think, a financial limit in spending on the construction of the new Consulate.

Q: None of that exists today.

MORGAN: You can't do anything like that, and you have no real authority and limited decision-making power—the Ambassador included. I was only 33. Also, I learned. I talked to architects, construction people, and the staff of the Consulate. I had already been in Birmingham a year, so I knew pretty much what I needed to make a good layout. The staff might not always agree with me, but I always asked and explained...and they were a bit subservient in manner, as British staff could be then.

Q: So, your two-year tour was up in 1960. How did you decide where to go?

MORGAN: Oh, I have to tell you that story. I received two notices. The diplomatic pouch arrived on a train, with a courier from the Embassy. He would get on the train in London once every three weeks. He had a pouch, containing both classified and unclassified material. We received open mail material directly through the open mails. However, the diplomatic pouch contained all of the official mail and all of the classified material. In between the pouches were these telegraphic messages in code. You had to get out your “One Time Pad” to decode them. That's a separate subject which I won't bore you with.

Anyhow, the courier arrived with the diplomatic pouch. The courier continued on to Manchester and Edinburgh. He made the “round.” I had to go to the train station and meet that specific train, because he would hand the pouch out the window, and away he would go. I took the pouch to the Consulate and removed the classified material and put it in the safe. There was the official mail and then personal mail. I took the personal mail to my house.

There were two letters in the pouch for me—one from John Stutesman, my old friend from USRO in Paris who had gone on to be Special Assistant to Loy Henderson, then the “Dean” of the Foreign Service. He was the first Under Secretary for Management —the first person to hold that position. He was really a more important person than the Director General of the Foreign Service. Anyhow, John Stutesman had gotten himself a nice assignment. He sent me this letter, saying how happy he was that I had done so well that I had been chosen to be Consul General in Edinburgh! I was moving within the United Kingdom, if you will. I was delighted that I would be Consul General—a promotion, indeed, in terms of responsibility. Edinburgh was a good-sized post, with four or five officers. This definitely represented a step up. I was confident that I could handle the job.

There was another letter, addressed to William D. Morgan, Esquire. Maybe it said, “Esq.” This was from the Director General and Director Personnel. It started out, “Mr. Morgan, we are very pleased to inform you that you have been chosen, under a very selective system, to go into Russian language training and to go to Moscow.” I was beginning to

learn more and more about the Foreign Service and the State Department. When I told my wife, she said, “What do you want to do?” I said, “I don't see how I can get out of Russian language training and assignment to the Soviet Union.” She said, “You'll probably be promoted faster. This will mean more money,” and all of that. I said, “I guess I'll do that.” So I telephoned John Stutesman in the Department of State the next day and told him about it. John was irate. He said, “This is impossible. I'll get back to you.” His boss, Loy Henderson, was, in effect, the boss of the Foreign Service. Well, Loy Henderson wasn't the boss after all, and I got a call back from John saying, “No, Bill, you're going into Russian language training.” That's how I was assigned to Russian and Moscow . Q: How did this happen?

MORGAN: I don't know and never asked.

Q: You never even found out?

A: I never found out. I had no need to find out.

Q: No “need to know.”

MORGAN: Right. Don't ask questions unless you want the answer to be what you want it to be.

Q: What criteria were used to select you to go to Russia?

MORGAN: I don't know. I said to John Stutesman, “John, which am I going to?” We were a very disciplined service then. If my wife and I had felt very strongly about one or the other, I probably would have voiced some objection. I won't use the word “naive,” but I really think that, during my entire career, I accepted what came my way. Yes, calls are made, and expressions of interest are recorded. However, I really don't think that I ever complained about or fought an assignment. At that time I accepted out of a sense of

discipline. And both of these assignments appeared to promise good jobs. I really didn't know what a “bad” job was.

Q: If you could put yourself back in time, can you say what you expected or what the life of a Foreign Service Officer would be in the Soviet Union in the early 1950's?

MORGAN: That's a wonderful question, because my first answer is, “I really don't remember.” I don't have any negative feelings coming back from my memory—no anxieties, no fears, nothing like that, except how would this assignment affect the children and my wife? I could never exclude them from this consideration. Back in those days the Department sent the post report to us, and still does. In those days it was very important and very helpful. It talked about schools and living conditions.

Q: What did the post report for Moscow say about schools?

MORGAN: Well, it said that life in the Soviet Union was difficult, and facilities were far from Western standards. It described the housing available. The Soviets assigned certain buildings to foreign diplomats. The post report described, and I subsequently learned, what it meant professionally to serve in the Soviet Union. Service there clearly meant entry into a very special group. That was not meant in a “snooty” way but in a proud, professional way. Everybody assigned to Moscow at that time had to know Russian. I would be going through a year's study of Russian in the United States and then a period of time at a university. As it turned out these two years were followed by a few months in Oberammergau Germany. So any anxieties that I might have had about the Moscow assignment and about how I would be prepared linguistically, academically, and from the intelligence point of view were quickly put to rest. I also soon learned that, despite the form of government and the nature of the Soviet “beast,” there was Russia, a country with a great history, with many similarities with the United States.

The wives, however, didn't get any preparation. They didn't receive Russian or university training. On their own, they went to libraries to read about the Soviet Union and Russian

culture and history. When you're spending much of your time raising children, running a home and adding to the income by part-time or volunteer work you also don't have too much time to learn about the next tour of duty. That, to me was the greatest drawback in the process of preparation for an assignment, especially as demanding a one as to Moscow. Oh, my wife and I did prepare for Moscow together. But a lot of it involved my passing on information to her. She tried to study Russian but it's hard on one's own. It's a hard language. She knew—and I knew—that her association with Russian-speaking people would be next to zero. We could find English-speaking people, but we knew that she would be excluded from contact with most individual Russians. I knew that my job would not be speaking Russian so much but mostly reading, although I didn't know that my duties as Publications Procurement Officer would take me all over the Soviet Union and in close contact with Russians, at least bookstoresalespersons!

That is a lengthy answer, but I think that, maybe, this is a good time to go into these considerations. What you're asking is how I felt at the beginning. My first answer was, “I don't know, I don't remember.” Obviously, some of my answer came at the beginning and some of it in the course of the two years of preparation for this assignment. Q: I'm also trying to get at how you felt about the Cold War and how that affected you as an “insider” in the U. S. Government, how that affected your professional outlook.

MORGAN: I think that I already partially answered that question when we talked about NATO. I had had an introduction to the realities of the Cold War and America's role in it. I learned some things about the Soviets and their system then. There were intelligence reports in USRO about conditions in the Soviet Union. Even though I read stacks of telegrams every morning, at first I did not focus on the Soviet Union. However, I learned about it.

Q: No, you have covered it. Were you aware of the realities of living in the Soviet Union, meaning the physical infrastructure, the political structure, and so forth?

MORGAN: Yes, once I got into the training program. I absorbed a lot [in the classes and then I started reading. The academic year at Columbia University—the university I was assigned to after the year of Russian at FSI (1960 and 61)—obviously had a great deal of material and courses that related to the Soviet Union and its authoritarian and ideological systems.

Q: You're saying that you read enough to understand, as opposed to what the general public knew, that the Soviet Union, on an economic or physical level, was not a super power. Were you at that point?

MORGAN: That's a major question. I don't know that anybody could answer that yet. If that had been the case, we wouldn't have done some of the things that we did. I think that we thought of the Soviets as “10 foot giants.” But once we lived in the Soviet midst and saw first hand we saw it indeed less as the superpower.

On the very day that we left Moscow, bag and baggage, even the elevator in our 9-floor apartment—and we were on that floor—didn't work. How in hell could they get to the moon? Looking back on it, I was aware of the very real weakness and oppression in the system and the reasons why the system could fall. Nevertheless, I was amazed when the Soviet Union fell—and the way that it did. Now, today, I say that. Were we “hoodwinked?” We knew the weaknesses. However, the Soviet Union seemed to have such strength, in terms of nuclear armaments, KGB intelligence, and the total control of the population.

My boss in the Political Section when I was in the Embassy in Moscow was Mac Toon. He always said, “Don't you know how strong they are?” This point was relevant the minute you stopped and thought, “These people are really weak!”

But to return to your opening question on how I felt abut the assignment. I knew that I was going to serve in the “heart” of the Foreign Service. I had learned in USRO that given the realities of the Cold War that our Embassy in Moscow was the heart of our Foreign Service

efforts. An up and coming Foreign Service Officer needed to have that particular ticket "punched." The career path through Moscow also was a very interesting and satisfying one. We knew also that there had to be major changes in the Soviet Union. If not, we had a "sick joke" in Moscow: If war comes, we'll go first, and clean, by "good" bombs.

Q: So you had a big career change when you accepted the assignment to Moscow. Part of the training involved two years of preparation? One year at the FSI (Foreign Service Institute) And a second year at Columbia. Was the university optional?

MORGAN: No.

Q: So the year at Columbia University was part of the program?

MORGAN: Yes. In those days it was a two-year training program. One year of language training and a second year at a university. The university was chosen each year. I was fortunate to be assigned to the Russian Institute at Columbia. The State Department had used other universities, including the University of California. The four other Foreign Service Officers and I who were in Russian training on this route to Moscow were Dick Funkhouser, Tom Fain, Peter Semler, and Carroll Woods. We went through nine months of Russian language training, from September, 1960, until June, 1961. Just to confuse you, Carroll Woods went right on to Moscow, in part because he had previously served there and largely because he had position to fill immediately. Dick Funkhouser worked in the summer months at the Army school in Oberammergau, Germany, and then to his more senior job as Economic Counselor. But Fain, Semler and I were left to find a job for ourselves in the three months before our academic year began.

Q: Until the fall?

MORGAN: Yes, until the Russian Institute at Columbia started up in September, 1961. We were literally without a job. We were told to go anywhere we wanted to go. I got a job in the Department in the East-West Exchanges Program in Washington. There were

three principal areas which dealt with Soviet affairs: the Soviet desk in the Bureau of European Affairs; the East-West Exchanges Program which, by then, had grown into a very important part of Soviet-American bilateral relations; and the Soviet Union unit in the Office of Research for Eastern Europe in INR (Bureau of Intelligence Research. The four of us went to different places. One of the others went with me to the East-West Exchanges Program.

It was fascinating. We were engaged in negotiations with the Soviets during part of this time. This was very helpful when I came back from the Embassy in Moscow to the Soviet desk (EUR/SOV), because one of my areas of responsibility there was to be SOV's representative on the committee handling the exchanges program with the Soviet Union. This was a fascinating program.

Q: We'll come back to that later. Let's switch now to the Foreign Service Institute and the beginning of your Russian language training. Could you talk a little bit about the training and courses you took at the Foreign Service Institute, from September, 1960, to June, 1961?

MORGAN: I remember that time as days of agony, but most people who have gone through language courses look at them with less than joy. Of course, as most of those who read or listen to these tapes know, the FSI was one of the first institutions to start a new type of language training. In fact, the FSI adopted the system developed, I think, at Syracuse University. Like a child, you started with simple phrases and kept building them up. You did not learn the “grammar” of the language, as most of us, including me, learned French, for example. Rather, you learned the language something like the way a child learns. It involved constant repetition of words and phrases. I remember that the word for “railroad” in Russian was insufferably long. We learned it in bits and pieces, as it were. The system works. Of course, most of us older people—and we were all well along in our 30's, and some in our 40's—had a terrible time adjusting to this system. The three Russian teachers that we had found this system equally difficult to adjust to. They all thought that

this system was terrible. It was hard for them, because they were repeating and repeating these words and phrases.

I will never forget some of these phrases and remember them to this day—even some that I never used. Some of them were hard to pronounce. Pronouncing Russian is hard for the American tongue. Some of the sounds are very difficult or virtually impossible for us to duplicate—like Chinese, for example, or Arabic. However, by drilling the words and phrases in this way, it somehow stays in your memory. That's what it was—nine months of that. Of course, we made some progress, but we never, ever, studied Russian “grammar.” We never, ever, made translations of what we studied. We could never ask the teacher, “What does it mean? What are you saying?” No, you had to say it in Russian. On the first day she would lift up a pen or pencil and say in Russian, “What is this?” Then we would move on, having no idea what the word meant. I think that we didn't have a book for two months. This was deliberate, because they wanted these sounds driven into our heads. Finally, we got a book. At the end of nine months I came out with a grade of 3-3 (Speaking - Useful, and Reading - Useful). As many of you know, 0 is none, 5 is absolutely bilingual. These numbers apply to both speaking and reading a language. I was sort of in the middle, as most of us were.It's difficult in most of the “hard” languages, such as Russian, Chinese, Arabic, Albanian, and some others, to get a much higher score. The course in Arabic and Chinese, I think, lasts for two years, before you reach a 3-3 level. The alphabet would be completely different with Arabic, and Chinese uses characters or ideographs, but that is irrelevant. First of all, we didn't even deal with an alphabet, until we were well into the language. The Russian Cyrillic alphabet makes sense. Some of the more difficult sounds are represented in it. The FSI training system works, but it involves back-breaking effort.

Q: So it was a complete “immersion” system.

MORGAN: Total. We would use tapes at night. We got quite a bit of homework. You had your tapes, which you would take home. You played them back. Then, when we did get

books, we had a text which I still have. The pages are brown with age and worn. The text “walked you through” both Cyrillic spelling and the phonetic spelling.

Q: What can you tell us about the “focus” of the language [training]? Did it all involve oral communication?

MORGAN: Yes. That's the only weak point. We complained about it. It was corrected a bit when we got to Oberammergau, which I'll tell you about in due course. A lot of the vocabulary was not “practical.” It did not involve how to analyze what a visa applicant was saying or how to “deal with” a Soviet Intourist guide. It all involved things like, “Hello. How are you today?” “Oh, I must go down to the railroad,” with emphasis on some of the more sophisticated but necessary parts of the complexities of the language. That is, whether this involves a “verb of motion” or parts of an automobile, in full adjectival declension!. And the grammar, of course, was simply insane. They didn't teach it as grammar, but it was there—the complexities of the endings, the complexities of the verbs and the conjugations. While we never conjugated a verb, as we know it in the old-fashioned way of language instruction, it was all out there. The “immersion” system supposedly got you into the grammar and syntax, but some of us could never get rid of this feeling, “I would like to know the grammar and see how this verb looks when it is conjugated.”

Q: How big was your class at the FS]? Did they all make it through?

MORGAN: They all made it through. We were five in the class, but never more than two or three in a given class room at any one time. We were mixed around a bit. The three persons in the class weren't always the same, though they tended to be. I think that we were assigned at first into groups. One of them included people like myself, who had “zero” knowledge of Russian. The other two had either served in Moscow as Marine Guards or, perhaps, had studied Russian in college. They had a little knowledge of Russian.

Q: What was their status—were they all Foreign Service Officers?

MORGAN: Yes. Dick Funkhouser's specialty was in petroleum. One had served in Yugoslavia. Another one had previously served in Russia, but without the language. Another one was married to a Russian woman. He spoke some Russian. He was the first one to “break the old rule” of not serving in a communist country with close family member ties to that country.

Q: Did all of them end up in the Soviet Union at some point?

MORGAN: Yes. Some of us went directly out of the FSI and did not go to Columbia. Three of us went to the Russian Institute at Columbia:

Q: Tell us a little about why the Foreign Service wanted to send you to Columbia and why they decided not to send other people in your class to Columbia.

MORGAN: Before World War II, and definitely during World War II, when people like George Kennan went into the training program, the Department had a language and area studies program. Some of the students attending it went to a university for the language and area. By “area,” I mean the area of specialization of that particular country. Cornell, Harvard, Columbia Universities and the University of California at Berkeley were all used for Russian studies. Similar programs existed for other languages and evolved into the FSI, plus one year area studies such as the Russian one.

When it was our turn to go to the area part we were told Columbia had been picked. The year before that it may have been Harvard or Princeton. I presume this was negotiated between the Office of Personnel in the State Department and the university. Each year Personnel probably goes out and looks around at the various universities. People in the State Department still go to universities. They go for management studies, and there might

still be some area studies. I believe that there isn't a Russian language/area program any more.

Q: Can you tell me something about the courses that you took at Columbia and discuss the teachers.

MORGAN: Yes. In fact, Columbia was a high point of my career. It was a brilliant, wonderful year. The Department paid the tuition. You did not have to work for a degree, but you did have to write a paper, which I did: “Soviet Ideology and Science”. The people in the Department gave us some guidance, but they didn't get into catalogues and say that we had to take this or that. We had to report to the Department which courses we were signing up for. We then got an “OK” on it.

The assignment covered a full academic year. We were detailed to the Russian Institute, which was, technically, our “home” at Columbia. The three of us reported to the Russian Institute together and were assigned to a “mentor” by the name of Zbigniew Brzezinski, who, at the time, was an eminent professor, or at least so proclaimed by “Zbigy,” but maybe by a few others too. He ended up as National Security Adviser with the Carter administration. With us he was very helpful and understanding. I'll be very blunt about it. He said that he enjoyed working with us because he also had to be a mentor to some of the military. He found them very difficult at the educational and intellectual levels that he was used to. He didn't like the military, as he proved later at the NSC.. We met with him individually and the three of us as a group once a month.

I didn't take any of my other courses with the other two FSOs except one on the Soviet system with “Zbigy.” He was brilliant. He was the most impressive and practical of the instructors during that whole year. I took courses on 16th and 19th century Russian literature, a course in Russian history, under Florinsky, an eminent professor of Russian history. He “wrote the book,” as it were. This course covered two semesters. I took a course in 20th century Russian/Soviet economics and another course in what amounted to

Soviet ideology, under a very distinguished professor, whose name I've forgotten. I wrote my paper under him. This largely covered the period of the 1930's and 1940's, when Stalin exercised control over the sciences—particularly sociology, to make sure that they were ideologically “pure.” There were other courses which I have forgotten. However, I was free to study what I wanted. The “bottom line” for all of us was to build a body of knowledge, not only for the history, economic life, and even present day realities that affect the Soviet people, but to get a perception of the “Soviet/Russian mind.” In other words, the realities of today and how they got that way. I also took a course in Eastern European history as an elective. I felt that I had to find out how the Soviet Bloc was operating.

Area studies worked! Without that year I don't know how it would have been like. However, I felt that, during my two years in Moscow and subsequent years on the Soviet desk in the State Department, I was extremely well-equipped.

Q: Tell us, then, what your feelings were toward the Soviet people and the Soviet Government— before you went to Moscow. Do you recall that?

MORGAN: I guess, to think back to that period, I probably felt like anybody who knew anything about the Soviet Union in a primitive sense. I had done university work in French and European history, so I knew something about Russia, but it was just another “blob” up there on the map. I certainly didn't have any strong feeling about it—except, of course, that after several years in the State Department and in USRO in particular the Soviet Union was “the enemy.” However, to be able to distinguish between Russia and Russian history, civilization, and culture, and the Soviet Union—this is what Columbia University did for me. And Brzezinski in particular. He was very good at this. I did another paper on Peter the Great's visit to France—how he was “ripped apart” by the French and talked down to. That gave me an insight into the complexities of their feeling as “second class people” and how they learned that the world looked down on Russia. On the religious side, my own knowledge of religion in Russia was very limited.

By the time I was ready to go to the Soviet Union—and particularly after my time in Oberammergau, which came that summer, after the end of the course at Columbia—I really felt that I knew the Russians. I felt that I could distinguish between Soviet authoritarian dictatorship and the Ruskaya dusha, the Russian soul. Some people argue that there is no such thing as a "soul," and I was weak on communism. However, I feel that you need to know that feeling to understand fully the doings of the Russians. How you deal with it and how you take it varies with the individual. My background in French literature, history, and so on probably led me to have a greater appreciation for the history and civilization of Russia.

Q: Were you thinking about the Russian people—how they suffered under the Soviet Government and their mentality? Were you looking beyond this Soviet mentality?

MORGAN: Well, I take your question but I can't answer it quite that way. The Soviet Government and mentality, on the one hand, and the outlook of the Russian people, on the other, are so interrelated. I think that I knew that 50 years—really, two generations under that controlled system—had made their impact. As a result of my area studies I learned a lot about the Soviet system; about half of my courses related to the Soviet controls and techniques. After all, the Russian people were used to living in a controlled society. The Czar obviously controlled the people, as their fathers and the church controlled their lives. I knew that the Russian people had fought against that system of control. They wrote about it, they mimicked it, and they wrote marvelous comedies about those forms of control—especially during the 19th century. There was a Russian "drive" not to be ashamed, to stand up—a feeling of nationalism, if you will, which goes back to the 14th and 15th centuries. There were intellectual schools of nationalism. I studied those movements and activities.. I guess that what I'm doing is twisting your question to say that it isn't a matter of distinction. It's integration, or how the Russians survived. You can ask this question today: how did the Russian people "tolerate" the Soviet system? Because it was the only way to survive. You "ratted" on your mother, if that was called for.

Q: So the Russian language training at the Foreign Service Institute and your studies at Columbia University ended in June, 1962. How did you get your orders to Moscow?

MORGAN: Again, there was the summer. We finished at Columbia in June, 1962 and were due at the Embassy in Moscow in September, 1962. Well, at the Department of State they told us that they didn't know what to do with us. Dick Funkhouser, who had been with us the year before at FSI and faced a similar issue, found out that the U. S. Army had a special “spy school,” if you will, as an extension of its advanced language courses at Monterey, California. This special school was located at Oberammergau, Germany. He found out that they didn't operate in summer. So they had all of those wonderful professors there, with not a thing to do. When asked, the Army said, “You-all come.” So the three of us from Columbia followed in Dick's footsteps of the year before.

Problem solved: we three went to Oberammergau for three months, with our families. It was a beautiful setting. We attended classes from 8:00 AM until, I think, 3:00 PM, or something like that. Meanwhile our wives and children enjoyed the scenery of Bavaria. We had no formal classes but rather private lessons. There was a “sea” of teachers up there, some of whom had fled very recently from the Soviet Union. They were “real” contemporary Soviets.

Q: For the record, can I humbly admit that I don't know where this Army school at Oberammergau really is. Can you say where it is and what its purpose is?

MORGAN: Oberammergau is near Garmisch-Partenkirchen in Bavaria, about 40 miles south of Munich. The center is there to “process” refugees from the Soviet Union, particularly military and intelligence types, to learn from them the most recent intelligence information on what's going on in the Soviet Union. By “intelligence,” I just mean “knowledge.” They would ask the refugees, “What's it like on the farm? What were you doing, what do you think of the regime,” and many other questions. It was run by U. S. Army intelligence, but I presume that the other services had access to the product. It

was basically gathering “background” information. These people, men and women, had defected from the Soviet Union. They were refugees and somehow had gotten across the Iron Curtain. They were “picked up” by the U. S. Army and interrogated and, in some cases, put on the faculty at this center. Some ended up as language tutors, but at the advanced level. All of the U.S. military students were there for, I think, two years. They start with zero knowledge of Russian. The Army gave us this summer deal because the professors were available.

Q: So Oberammergau is not only a refugee processing center. It is also a language center for U. S. personnel.

MORGAN: Yes, but let me state it differently. It is not really a “refugee processing center” in the sense that the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) is involved.

Q: It is an intelligence processing center.

MORGAN: Yes. It involves bringing together refugees who possess military and general intelligence. As you know, that can involve anything about the contemporary USSR. It largely concerns “attitudinal” information. Army intelligence personnel interrogated these people. That was the purpose of this center. The Army's Russian language training school was part of it. I don't know whether it began as that.

As “teachers” for the three of us, they had no curriculum, no texts or the like. I sat down with one of them. He said, “What can I now tell you about live in the USSR?” Each of us had our own tutors.. The U.S. director of the Oberammergau center would say, “This instructor has just arrived, and I think that she'll be good at talking to you about life in Moscow.” They would do anything that you asked them to do. I told them that I was going to the American Embassy in Moscow, that it was my first assignment there, and that I would be Publications Procurement Officer.

I said to one of them, “Teach me the practical Russian—language and mannerisms I need to survive and get the job done successfully.. He answered (in Russian. None of them spoke any English): I will be rude to you”. I will be just like the clerk that is going to be in the bookstore. I will be like the KGB [Soviet intelligence] officer trailing you. Actually, that was my job before I defected. I will do all these things to you.” He knew a great deal of “street” Russian and the kind of Russian which, he said, “will turn their ears onto you.” And he actually did that for most of those three months. Above all, this gave me confidence that I could step off the plane in Moscow and really walk into that situation. He told me story after story. He had lived in Moscow for a while and in other places which I subsequently visited. He was able to show me what the Soviet Union was really like, using his heart and tears. Yes, “tears.” He had had to leave his family behind. He was a wonderful man. He would tell stories about the realities of the Soviet Union. Back at the FSI and Columbia, the teachers were great, but they were academics in their approach.

Q: Can you remember any of the stories he told you?

MORGAN: Not specifically at the moment. He would tell me story after story—when you walk along the street, when you get on a bus, when you walk into a store. He would say, “Don't do this. Do that.” I am reflecting back on the full two years of training: my year at the FSI and the year at Columbia when my wife and children stayed back here in Washington. I rented a room in a house owned by a Russian couple. I took Russian lessons from them and spoke only Russian with them. But that Russian was, of course, “Czarist Russian,” because they had been refugees from “White” Russia back in the 1920's. The Russian I spoke would make my teacher at Oberammergau laugh his head off. He said, “They don't speak that way any more. It sounds ridiculous the way you say it.” And then there were the acronyms and special words used in contemporary, Soviet society. I learned them from him, thank Heavens..

Q: I asked that because before, when I was in the Soviet Union, there were several stories that stuck in my mind. They were my first, real life and personal impressions.

MORGAN: Well, you are younger and closer to that time [when you were in the Soviet Union]. I am trying to remember what happened 25 or 30 years ago.

Q: Well, did you work with any of the refugees?

MORGAN: No.

Q: It was strictly at the school?

MORGAN: Well, the teachers at the school were all refugees. This man I have spoken of was a refugee—or defector, if you wish. I use the word “refugee” to mean someone who had “fled”, sought refuge from the Soviet Union for a variety of reasons—political or personal or whatever. They were refugees in that sense.

Q: Did you ever witness any of the interrogations or debriefings?

MORGAN: No. You see, nothing was going on during the summer we were there. The school was closed when we were there. The U.S. and most of the Soviets faculty was on vacation. However, when they weren't on vacation, there they sat, with absolutely nothing to do. The U. S. taxpayers—you and me—were paying their salaries. The Army welcomed being able to put them to work. We could do anything that we wanted to do, as long as we showed up with our mentor.

Q: Did you live off base?

MORGAN: Yes, just off base—about a quarter of a mile down the road. The Base was in the country, not in a regular town. The hotel we lived in was a regular Bavarian picturesque place. It even had nasturtiums hanging from each balcony.

Q: Then orders came in. At what point did you know that you were going to Moscow?

MORGAN: I knew that from the very beginning. When I was assigned to Russian language and area training, there was a whole “block” order issued, covering everything, including the actual assignment to Moscow.

Q: Why did the Foreign Service wait from June until September, 1962? You finished your language study at the Foreign Service Institute and your training at Columbia in June.

MORGAN: September, 1962 was when my predecessor, Herb Okun, was leaving Moscow. We were all replacing other people, and we replaced them when they left Moscow. I think that we probably “overlapped” for a short time. We got to Moscow in late August, and Herb Okun left in early September. Also, there was the matter of housing. You had to have a place to stay, so you had to get your predecessor out of the apartment so you could move in, after a repainting job!.

Q: May we come to Moscow now? May I ask about your immediate impressions of the Soviet Union, if you can remember them, on your first arrival?

MORGAN: First impressions, above all, I will never forget. My wife, children, and I were met by the Embassy driver.

Q: Did you fly in on a commercial flight?

MORGAN: Let me think. We flew from Munich to Vienna, then Aeroflot from Vienna to Moscow, non-stop. About the only way you could get into Moscow in those days was from Vienna. There was no Pan Am or any other commercial airline service available. Maybe there was a flight available from Paris, but I can't remember it.

It was an afternoon flight. We got off the plane about 7:00 or 8:00 PM. It was a Sunday night, as I remember. It had to be a Sunday night. It was dark by the time we were through

the formalities. I think that Peter Bridges from the Embassy came to the airport and met us. We took the apartment for temporary visitors in a part of the Embassy where the Marine Guards and the DCM lived. There were four or five apartments like this when we first arrived. Peter Bridges, his wife, and children were in the adjoining apartment. He brought us up to our apartment and then brought us over to theirs for drinks and to meet his wife, and kids-on-kids. At that point, after this nice, warm welcome, and the feeling you get in the Foreign Service or any other organization, where people take care of their colleagues, we looked out at the skies of Moscow. On our way into Moscow we drove past the Kremlin and through Red Square. We had a nice view of Moscow, which was lighted. There was a tremendous display of fireworks. The skies were just filled with flares and sounds.. Well, it wasn't for us, of course. Every Sunday night the Soviets have fireworks. So our first arrival in Moscow was just fine. Q: Did you have any trouble going through customs?

MORGAN: No.

Q: Did you have a diplomatic passport?

MORGAN: Yes. I don't remember any delays. I'm sure that if there had been any, I would recall. If my wife were here, she would remember more particularly, I'm sure. After what I had heard about the bureaucracy and the heaviness, I thought, “My God, are we really in the Soviet Union?”

Q: How did your children feel?

MORGAN: The kids couldn't have cared less. They were about 10 and 7 years old. They wondered who their new friends would be and where their new school was. I should have asked my son that question before I came here today. He should remember those early days because a few weeks later we moved into our assigned apartment. The very first word of Russian that he learned was “durok”, the Russian word for “stupid” or “idiot,” as you know. That's what a Russian “neighbor” kid said in the courtyard of the apartment

building when he hit my son over the head with a brick! I saw my son scraping up the stairs with blood running down his face. He said that a Russian kid had called him “durok.” My son asked its meaning; it was his first serious encounter with Soviet society.

As new arrivals we were waiting for our Finnish maid to arrive and getting ourselves together. Of course, I went to work at the Embassy. My wife was well taken care of by other Embassy wives. She did the rounds and met people.

Q: Do we still have the same Embassy?

MORGAN: Yes, it's in the old building on Tchaikovsky Street..

Q: It's a very nice building.

MORGAN: That's a real joke. It's a dump! I mean, you're crowded. It's a small place.

Q: It's very crowded. When I visited the Embassy three years ago, the space for the Visa Section was extremely crowded.

MORGAN: Very poor conditions. I think that it's changed.

Q: The Soviets who were waiting for visas said that the conditions are terrible.

MORGAN: A few years ago the Soviet authorities dismissed all of the Russian employees. So the Embassy until recently has had none of the support staff to help us in communicating with and doing the staff work necessary to process the visa applicants. Let me interrupt this train of thought to make a point clear. I'm not sure how long this was the personnel policy before and after me, but during my time in Moscow all junior and mid-level Foreign Service Officers who had gone through the Russian language and area courses and were then assigned to the Embassy in Moscow got, with very few exceptions, two different work assignments during their tour.. They had one year in one Section and one year in another. For most of us the first year was in the Administrative, Consular, or

Publications Procurement Section. I was in Publications Procurement. Then, during the second year, you were assigned to the Political or Economic Sections, depending on your background. My second year was spent in the Political Section. If you went to Moscow as the Science Officer, a highly specialized assignment, it was different. For example, Dick Funkhouser was the Economic Counselor during his whole tour. If you were assigned as DCM, that's what you were. But most of us had come into the Russian program at the junior or middle level and went to Moscow as middle level officers. There was nobody below us. That was the program, and I thought that I should make that clear.

Q: All right. Where did you live and what kind of Embassy regulations did you live under—from Personnel? And what kind of Soviet regulations were you subject to?

MORGAN: We had two main apartment houses some distance from the Embassy: at Sorok pyat (45) Leninsky Prospekt, the one we were assigned to, and another similar one whose name I forget. The Soviets assigned us the space, as they did all foreigners living in Moscow. They were supposedly “new, modern buildings.”, but that was all: “new”.

Our building was a nine-story shaft, in the sense that it had one staircase up the middle of our wing of this enormous U-shaped monster. Everyone on that “shaft” was from the American Embassy, with the exception of maybe one or two American correspondents. One of them was really a reputedly KGB “employee” named Ed Stevens, who lived on one of the lower floors. There were two apartments on each floor. Each family was there for two years, coincidentally with their tours of duty. Our neighbors were the Perrys, Kirks, Semlers, Morans and others. We were all good friends and neighbors. You better be under those circumstances.

Of course, there was a big, ever-alert guard at the entrance. Allegedly there to protect us (from whom?), no one else could come in but us or other authorized diplomats. Additionally, we had a so-called concierge on the ground floor. Since she helped us in no way I presumed she was just the secondary line of defense to make sure that we didn't

do anything “unauthorized or unobserved”. Her main function was to suffer our curses as we went by her whenever the elevator didn't work—which was frequently. We lived on the ninth floor. It seemed that the elevator never worked on what we called “commissary days” when the Embassy Commissary received a shipment of milk, lettuce, and fresh vegetables, which came in from Finland. That would be the day when we would come home with huge cases of groceries which lasted a couple of weeks, at least. But the elevators wouldn't work, due to “technical difficulties.”

On our last day in Moscow, we were all ready to leave for good. Our kids and suitcases were out at the elevator—and, of course, it didn't work. So down we went, lugging our bags and baggage. Of course, now, there is a procedure to go through on your way out. This was a happy moment. The concierge was there, grinning. We said goodbye. I said that the elevator still wasn't working. I had to giver her my last words in impeccable Russian: “You got to the moon, but you can't even get an elevator to the ninth floor! So that was my farewell to the USSR. Smell a little bit of paranoia?...

Q: As an anecdote, you said that you had an American correspondent in your building who was really a KGB agent?

MORGAN: Yes, reportedly

Q: What paper did he represent?

MORGAN: He was one of the top correspondents. I think that he represented the AP Associated Press, or perhaps it was a British paper.. We all suspected that he was a KGB agent. There has been some discussion about this in recent months about an American correspondent who was in Moscow for a number of years. He was accused by “Time” magazine of being a KGB agent. Then came Warren Zimmermann's (DCM at the time), and our Department's responses, in part, to that. Everyone serving in Moscow gets a share of his information from people who are tied into the KGB in some way. The KGB is one of the best sources of information. Does that make you an “agent”? If you know about

your source you make allowances for it.We, in the Embassy, more or less knew who is what, though not always.

Another news agency American was Shapiro who had been in Moscow for 30 or 40 years. He was considered reliable. How can you survive that? How can you be tolerated in the Soviet Union and have that kind of knowledge—and not have some sort or another of a connection with the KGB? But I think that Ed Stevens, by the way, “alluded” that he was closely tied with the KGB. But an “agent,” using KGB information, often was spreading “disinformation,” along with good information. Such an agent is probably paid, just as the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) has people who are recruited to provide information and at times disseminate some. However, Stevens, as I remember when I was in the Political Section, was known as a source of potentially flawed information.

Q: Did you ever have any social contact with him?

MORGAN: Yes. He was at cocktail parties I went to, and I saw him about our apartment “shaft”. He was not a “friend” in any real sense. Also, correspondents live a different life than diplomats do. They are always after different stories, which ultimately appear in the media or publications. At the time I was in Moscow the American community was very small. It was just about limited to correspondents and diplomats. There was also a delightful American Catholic priest whose position had been there since the time of Litvinov-Roosevelt agreements in the early 1930's. There were no resident businessmen, apart from an American Express representative. However, I think that even he was a Russian national. I don't think that he was an American. So, we “fed” on each other—and still do. Correspondents are marvelous sources of information.

Q: Could you tell us a little bit more about the demographics of the foreign community there and, in particular, the American community, and their role?

MORGAN: I can't give you the number of people in the foreign community. There must have been about 50 or more full-fledged embassies. They were there for their own

reasons. The British, the French—the NATO embassies, if you will—were there as normal embassies in the capital of an “enemy” country, the Soviet Union. The Ambassadors of these NATO countries would get together and have regular meetings. The people in the British, French, and Canadian Embassies were probably our closest social and professional contacts. We got together for cocktail parties and small dinners. They were small because our apartments were small. You could get six or eight people in our dining room for dinner, and that was it. You could have a “stand up” cocktail party or buffet, and there were an awful lot of them. As a matter of fact—and I am now rather “picky” about it—that was probably, believe it or not, one of the greatest pressures on us in those two years in Moscow. This way of life meant going out an awful lot—for personal and professional survival. Just to be able to talk to people. Also, you needed to exchange information with people. You needed to tell stories, just plain old stories about life. These social contacts provided a means to “let loose.” In a very closed society, that is what you have to do. This is how you can be human.

Also, to get back to your question as to what it's like to live in the Soviet Union, given Russian history and authoritarian realities. Some foreigners lived there for a number of years. Some of them were really “bilingual” or even “multilingual.” Press people would show up on these occasions, but it was usually American Embassy functions within the Embassy or with other diplomats. There were rarely Soviets who showed up, and if so, very “authorized” bureaucrats. You rarely tried to invite Soviets to your house. The chances were “zero” that they would show up. We had acceptances from Soviet acquaintances, but practically never had the honor of their coming. Of course to Spaso House, the Ambassador's residence was something different. But he also never was certain who would arrive at the front door. We in attendance had fun guessing who'd come to his affairs.

My wife had one special experience. If I may diverge here, I will mention this because it was to us a very special example of the realities of the Soviet Union. I was on a trip to Central Asia shortly after President Kennedy was assassinated in November, 1963. When

I came back, my wife said that she had had a phone call. She knew well that she had to be careful about her calls, which might be harassing KGB calls to shake her up while I was absent. They are seldom from friendly Russians who are calling to find out what the price of eggs is in New York. Although Russians lived in other wings of this huge enclave of perhaps 200 apartments, some with more than one family to an apartment, they didn't dare to contact you directly, unless authorized. You might look out the window, see a funeral, and realize that one of them had died. However, you never had any direct contact with ordinary Soviets. That was a near impossibility.

My wife received one of these rare telephone calls. We knew that it had been “taped,” as all of our phones were. The man concerned was a young Russian in tears. he wanted to know how saddened he was by Kennedy's assassination and that most Russians felt as he did. I came on the phone and he went on and on, recalling how he and my wife had met and he wanted us to know how ashamed he was of the Soviet control system and had been caught up in it when he had accepted a dinner invitation to our house some months before.

He had actually met my wife when I was away on a trip the previous summer. She was out with the children at the diplomatic, or almost totally diplomatic beach on the Moscow River, where the Soviets allowed us to swim. This man came up to her as she was reading a James Bond novel. He started speaking to her in English. It was most unusual in itself that such a contact would be made. It was a beach scene, and there are no “barriers” around the area. However, ordinary Soviets don't go there. If a Russian went there, he would be picked up by the police. They would be interrogated and asked, “What are you doing?” Probably, they would just be whisked away.

So she was approached by this fellow who spoke quite good English. It ended up that she gave him our telephone number. He called again, a few days later, while I was still away. My wife said, “Come on over.” He said that he would like to come over. When I returned to Moscow, we set up a date for him to drop in for a drink and have dinner. I even called

him back on the phone so that the Soviet authorities would know about it and that it was totally on the up and up. He said that he had been told that he could not accept but he had asked for reconsideration. So we thought that he must be a KGB officer. We even arranged to have him picked up by an American Embassy car. This was so above boarWe even learned more about who he was—a writer of some sort. The bottom line of all of this is that the driver went to pick him up, and there was no such address whatsoever. The whole thing had vanished. It really upset my wife.

Back to you question about the diplomatic community. While the most numerous ties contacts were with representatives of the Scandinavian and NATO countries, we also had contacts with the Indians, Indonesians, Arabs, and so on. Many of these colleagues had their own special functions to perform. India's mission, for example, had its special relations with the Soviets. The Arabs were something else, but most had particular issues to pursue because of their geographical proximity to the USSR and that they were largely Third-World, trying to maintain a balance with the West and the Communist world.

The African countries had “Lumumba University,” established by the Soviets to teach the African people of newly free nations, how “evil” the capitalist countries were, and particularly the United States, and how wonderful the Soviet system was. These students went back to their own countries, fully trained in Russian and in Russian techniques and ideology. These countries obviously had somewhat different kinds of diplomatic missions than we did. Most of these non-NATO and non-Western embassies were there to make sure that the Soviet Union was not harming them but, rather, was giving them support. The Cuban mission obviously had a very special relationship with the Soviets. Once in front of our apartment there was a very dramatic, special parade. Groups were assembled by bus loads to applauded Fidel Castro with great gusto. After he went by, calm returned and away they went in the organized buses..

I can't leave this story without telling you about the special “access” these non-Western diplomats had to Soviet sources. Their apartments were often filled with exceptional works

of Russian art and pre-Revolutionary antiques. I remember we were once invited by the Second Secretary of the Indonesian Embassy to come to dinner. There were just my wife and I and he and his wife present. Very soon after we arrived and had had drinks, he took us back to his spare bedroom. It was covered, top to bottom, and all over the floor with magnificent, really “genuine” 13th to 19th century Russian religious ikons. There were paintings—forbidden paintings under the Soviet system—by contemporary, “impressionist” Russian artists. They were “good buys”—very good buys. When you left the Soviet Union, you could sell anything that you wanted—your car, for example, and the kind of “junk” that you wanted to get rid of at a yard sale, for example. Only embassy people came—from most of the Arab countries, India, Indonesia, etc. They “swarmed” through our apartment. They took my clothes out of the closets. They would give me almost any price I asked. They were prepared to buy everything that we had, except that, obviously, we didn't want to sell most of it. The Sudanese ambassador bought my beat-up old British Ford! So this was one aspect of the “unique” nature of Moscow society among the Diplomatic Corps. Q: Did you use the diplomatic community as a source of information, say diplomats from the non-aligned countries, for example?

MORGAN: Yes, indeed. But they were very poorly informed. Most of what they had in the way of basic political and economic information came from us. We were trained, we were the experts, we were the major power. They knew that, even though Moscow and Washington were at odds, what we were told and how we were told it, was significant to them. It probably was useful to them. Now, how reliable they were as sources of information to us was another question.. That didn't mean that there were not well-informed, professional and intelligent people among them. However, you had to be careful. Were they in the pay of the KGB or even innocently passing on to us disinformation? The amount of useful, reliable information which you could obtain from them was surprisingly limited. Some, of course, had deep ties—family and other—into the Soviet society. Some had lived there for years. Others had a abetter life in Moscow than in their own countries.

Q: I should have asked this question before we began to discuss your time in Moscow. Did you have any kind of special security training before you went to Moscow—on how to behave, the KGB, and so forth?

MORGAN: Oh, yes. “Training” probably is too formal a word. I don't remember that there was any course which you attended for a week or so. We did have to go through a security briefing given by SY (Office of Security). We were warned that we would be followed and that the Soviets would try to get us to “defect.” They talked about Soviet KGB “methodology”. But this was the kind of the thing that you would have picked up anyway by reading the “Washington Post.” It wasn't any particular kind of “inside” information. The security people, for example, finally discovered the place where all of the tapping of the Embassy was done. One day the “Seabees”...

Q: What's a “Seabee”?

MORGAN: A “Seabee” is an engineering, plumbing, technical, or electronic specialist from a Navy Construction Battalion on loan to the State Department for construction work in the American Embassy in Moscow. The American Embassy building had been built during the Stalin era. Stalin couldn't abide the fact that our previous building had been practically under the Kremlin Wall. He wanted to get us away from Red Square and gave us this building on the Ring Road, Ulitsa Tchaikovsogo. It was reportedly “built” for us, but in fact was constructed for VIP Soviet authorities. It was a nine story apartment type building in a nice district between the Moscow River and the Kremlin, with a big courtyard. It would have been a great residence for senior officials of the Communist Party. Therefore, the building was already totally “bugged” with electronic listening devices, since above all the KGB had to listen in on their own leaders. From Stalin's point of view the building was perfect for us. It was making Stalin's dream come true, because it got us out of Red Square and into a well “surveyed” embassy. So in the late 1940's or early 1950's, I think it was, the Embassy moved to the building on Tchaikovsky Street, which, as I said, was all nicely “bugged.” We knew that. We knew that something was wrong. The

telephones in those days, as you probably know—they're more sophisticated now—were a wonderful source of information for the Soviets, because the telephone lines belonged to the Soviet Union. Their wires ran right down to your desk, and the phones made wonderful “speakers.” Actually, the “speaker” was the telephone itself, because the “vibrator” on the telephone takes your voice and converts it into minuscule vibrations. If you send these vibrations into the telephone wires, an electronic device can reconvert them into the words you actually use. But they can't make elevators work effectively! It's a matter of priorities.

What we did was to “unplug” the telephones by installing a kind of “circuit breaker” between the telephone instrument and the telephone wire. That broke the circuit, so that the sounds that came through the telephone could not get easily into the telephone lines, and the Soviets could no longer “tap” the telephones. For a long time we had known that they were doing this and probably had other tapping devises built into the building. We knew they were actively trying to listen in to our conversations because you could see them doing it. I could look out my office window and see on top of the adjoining building some but not all of the equipment they were using. We knew what they were doing. Once in a while we could see someone “fiddling around” with the machinery up there on top of the roof.

Q: Do you remember the church across the street from the Embassy?

MORGAN: Yes, in the back.

Q: I was told that the church was completely taken over by the KGB.

MORGAN: Oh, I am sure of that. Also, the building across the street and in front of the Embassy a big apartment/office building and obviously was being used by the Internal Security Forces. What I'm getting at is that we knew that there was an “inner” listening system, in our building, but we couldn't find it. The Seabees came in while I was there. Behind my free standing, hot water radiator they found the first evidence of where the listening devices of the “inner” listening system were. They ripped out the radiator and

went at it. What they discovered was that behind the radiator, to make it harder to find the listening device behind it, was a pinhole. The Seabees found it because the paint job wasn't very good behind the radiator and they used “sound waves” beamed through the whole Embassy wiring system. Out came the first metal, straw shaped device about six inches long. That went into a total wiring system buried in the middle of the walls throughout the entire Embassy. So the Seabees went through the Embassy, ripping out entire walls and uncovering this system. But that story is a long way from your question about security training I was given!

Q: I asked you whether you had been warned and briefed about security before you went to Moscow.

MORGAN: Well, we knew or learned things like that. We also knew that we were being followed, we knew that the intention was to get me to “defect” to the Soviets and tell them all my secrets—which I didn't have!

Q: Were you ever “approached” by the KGB?

MORGAN: Oh, yes. During my first year as a Publications Procurement Officer...Shall I tell you now about the two jobs I had in the Embassy in Moscow? Would that fit in now?

Q: Yes, why not describe your work, and then we can work around to the security aspect. You started work in the Embassy in Moscow in September, 1962, as a Publications Procurement Officer.

MORGAN: Right. There were two of us—Bob German and I. The briefings before I left Washington were at the CIA, the Library of Congress, and so on.

Q: This was a briefing on how to do your job?

MORGAN: Yes. The job, publications procurement, was exactly that. I bought books and periodicals. In those days—and from the beginning of our diplomatic relations with

the Soviet Union in the 1930's, through World War II, and since then—the PPO job was probably the single most important source of intelligence about the Soviet Union. (PPO is obviously the acronym.) This was because our contacts with anti-Soviet agents and defectors in and from the Soviet Union were limited. As you know, the entire world of the CIA and other such agencies is to decide what is good intelligence, what is important, and what goes to the President. What is decided on the basis of such information is another matter. The Penkovsky Affair was the big spy/intelligence story of our time, or at least my tour there. In fact, my colleague, Bob German, was accused of being involved in that case. I'll get back to that later.

The publications procurement job involves going out and buying a copy of every new book that you could lay your hands on published in the Soviet Union, “period”. We called this “WF,” a not so terribly secret acronym for the funds given us by the CIA. It stood for the “Working Fund,” and the Soviets must have known this. We had a delightful Russian national packer down in the Embassy storage area. He would bundle up books for us, once a week, to be shipped out by diplomatic pouch. He must have known the purpose of his labors and the source of his salary, or should I say salaries. That's how we shipped the books out to 19 agencies, as I remember, in the U. S. Government. The principal customer was “WF.” They (the CIA) paid all of the bills, then, back in Washington, the various agencies would resettle the accounts. The second biggest customer was the Library of Congress. The Library of Congress wanted a copy of every new book, magazine, newspaper and map published in the Soviet Union, except novels! They would scold me if I sent them a novel by mistake.

Q: Would it affect their color scheme?

MORGAN: I would like to accept that as the rationale, but I don't think that was the reason. Other customers included the Library of the State Department, the Department of Defense, and other major U. S. Government agencies. I can't remember which ones they were in those days, but agencies concerned with the environment, education, and so forth. So all I

had to do was to settle my accounts a month later or so with the “Working Fund,” and then the other Washington agencies settled the bills with “WF”.

The actual modus operandi was that Bob German and I would divide up the Soviet Union. We would make trips to every single republic and to Siberia. One or the other of us were on the road, most of the time. Usually a given trip lasted for about a week. We would go to the capitals of the various Soviet republics, because we were pretty much restricted by the authorities from going anywhere else. They wouldn't let us into smaller places—and certainly not to the more interesting places. Leningrad was, thank Heavens, one of the exceptions.

In Moscow, Bob or I went to Bookstore No. 1 every Monday. We had a marvelous relationship with the lady there who ran the shop. She said to us once, “You help me to fulfill my monthly quota!” She loved us. She set books aside for us, as did many of the other, specialized bookstores in Moscow, and particularly the Map Library. We had a special, and very good contract with the U.S. Army Map Service. In turn, we had a special arrangement with the guy at the Map Store in Moscow. He knew where his maps were going, but he could meet his quota with our help. He would curse us for buying maps by the dozens to ship to “the enemy”, but then grin an appreciation whenever Bob or I would go into his store, and Bob or I would do quite often. The Map Store had a different name in Leningrad, now St. Petersburg.

However, in Moscow the principal outlet was Bookstore No. 1—I can't remember the full name in Russian. When the bookstore lady got in a shipment of new books, she always set aside one copy for us. I would arrive at the shop and go back to her office. She would pull out of a cupboard stacks—sometimes 100 or several hundred—new books. I would take every one of those books. In pencil, up in the corner I would put 0, 5, 15, 100 or whatever. Mentally, I had to figure out which of my “customers” wanted this particular book, and how many copies. What I did was to turn to the back of the book, look at the

“tirage”—number of copies published—and thereby whether this was a relatively “rare” or limited publication book.

Q: The term is “the number of books in print.”

MORGAN: Yes. Then I had to be careful. If I took all 100 copies of the book, then she would say, “I can't do that, because I have to provide this to this or that other customer.” So you had to figure out how to settle this. Our “coup” the book by a Soviet general—Sokolov, as I remember—on new Soviet nuclear power strategy. Somehow, this book got through the distribution system and was published. The U. S., military, and others at home, went wild about that one. We bought about 300 copies of it over a period of time. It was “the” document used by the U. S. military for years as “the Bible” as far as our relationship was with the Soviets in terms of our nuclear power interface. That is just an example. The Russians were very precise. They don't “lie” unless they have to, for some ideological reason. They are proud of their scientific research, their map making, and all of this. So we knew that what we were buying was pretty good stuff—unless it was deliberately intended to mislead us.

But that's the way we did our job. We marked the copies. Then the bookseller might say, “Oh, I only have 10 copies. I don't have the 20 copies you want.” Then she'd say, “Why do you want 20 copies? Who back there [in the United States] wants 20 copies?” And she'd laugh. She couldn't care less.

I would go to other bookstores, although less often, all over Moscow and the Soviet Union. I went to Leningrad, probably every two months. Kiev we did every two or three months. The Dom Knigi (House of Books) in Leningrad had the same arrangement with us as Book Store No. 1, in Moscow. They loved to have us come, and were even more friendly and less “heavy”. The farther you were from Moscow, the more relaxed the booksellers were and the more they enjoyed it—with some exceptions, and that's where the KGB came in. They knew what we were doing but they didn't dare stop us. If they did, we could, although

to a less effective degree, pull down the curtains in the U. S. on them and make their purchasing of U. S. books more difficult. I hope that they knew in their heart of hearts that their information, which we were getting, was far more valuable than what they could get out of public sources in the U. S.

To go back to your question about the context and atmosphere of our trips during my first year in Moscow as PPO, that was where Bob German was caught. “Caught” is the wrong word, but that's what happened, in connection with the Penkovsky story. Bob was publicly named as having been in a certain bookstore, taking information from Penkovsky. It was in the newspapers as part of the material bought up at Penkovsky's “trial,” at which Penkovsky was found guilty and subsequently executed. I was not included as one of the “evil” Pops. We concluded German was singled out in order to blacken or at least throw suspicion on our book-buying and perhaps caution our book store helpers.

Q: For our readers, could you give us a brief overview of the Penkovsky affair?

MORGAN: Yes. Penkovsky was a Soviet military officer who defected to us “inside” the Soviet Union. Those who defect decide that they wish to associate themselves with the United States or another country. Those who stay in their country are the greatest sources of intelligence because they remain “plugged into” the system. He was a Soviet Air Force officer, I believe, although I am not sure. It doesn't matter. He was high enough up to have access to some very interesting material at the time of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. This relationship with Penkovsky lasted over a period of years. Our Embassy doctor was an Air Force officer. I don't think he was the CIA Chief of Station. Anyway, he was the principal contact with Penkovsky, “under the lights and by the bridge” as was reported in the Soviet press. The “doctor” was PNGed—declared Persona Non Grata—and kicked out of the Soviet Union.

What the KGB caught Penkovsky on was passing information over a lengthy period of time. But the most significant thing was that he—as I understand it, though not from my

own sources but from the newspapers—was the principal source for information about Cuba over the years regarding what the Soviets were going to do and how they were going to do it. This climaxed after the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

Q: Did you ever meet him?

MORGAN: No. Good gracious, no American ever met him! That would be denied categorically. Americans assigned to go to the “lamp post” may have met him, but...

Q: What does that mean, “go to the lamp post”?

MORGAN: That's where they exchanged information and money, the traditional—or at least written in spy novels, and Pravda—way in which espionki (espionage agents) do their business. They do it in a mail box, or by lamp poles, “under the bush,” or something like that.

Q: You said that Bob German was approached by the KGB?

MORGAN: No. Well, no more than I was, in terms of being roughed up by some huge guy behind you. Harassment.

Q: Tell us a little bit about the harassment.

MORGAN: Well, middle of the night telephone calls. You're all set to go on a trip, and it's canceled. You go to the train station to catch a train, and you're not allowed to board it. Your permission has been canceled.

Q: When you say “harassment by telephone,” what are we talking about?

MORGAN: Things like telephone calls at unusual hours and “heavy breathing.” We used to get those at our apartment frequently, and in patterns. People would come to our apartment.

This story was not exactly harassment aimed at me, but I put it into the general Soviet anti-US antics. I was called in the middle of the nigh by the Embassy Duty Officer since I was on the Embassy fire team or its housing group. The story given me was that the building was on fire. One of our Marine Guards, who should have known better, had his replacement or a new Marine on duty for the first night. The new Marine was brand new to Moscow and, poorly briefed, assigned to burn the classified waste for the day. The place that you burned the classified material was up in the Embassy building attic. The poor guy burned the material in the wrong place. He actually started his fire next to the open ventilation system of the entire Embassy. Flames and smoke were going through the vents. Well, we had to call the police and finally called the fire department. That's when I was called in. Several other officers of the Embassy and I stood there, preventing the Fire Department from getting into where they wanted to go, which was the Code Room. They kept insisting, “The fire is back here on this level.” We kept saying, “It's upstairs! You can see it up there. That's where the flames are.”

Q: You kept them from entering which building?

MORGAN: We prevented the Soviet firemen and other “authorities” from going into that part of the Embassy where the Code Room was, which is where they really wanted to go. They used every ruse (I wonder where we got that word?) they could to say that the fire was back there. They said, “That's where the water system is.” We kept saying, “No, the fire is up in the attic.” And then the firemen proceeded to put the fire out. I think that we could have as effectively put the fire out. Of course, the Marine Guard involved was on the next plane out of the Soviet Union.

Q: Was anyone in the Embassy, to the best of your knowledge, ever “roughed up”?

MORGAN: Yes, or poisoned, which was one of the principal ways of doing it.

Q: Tell us about it.

MORGAN: Say you are on a trip. You have dinner. You always travel in pairs—like nuns. Someone slips something into your food. When I say “poison,” it can be anything. You wake up in the middle of the night and wish you were dead—in pain and so forth. It never happened to me, but to several of those with me at the time. My “misadventures” of that sort were in Eastern Europe. In Romania I had a woman come into my shower to proposition me.. That's the closest I came to being poisoned!

I would say that almost every U. S. military officer, who traveled all the time, has had an experience with poisoning or drugging. And often the whole party of who were together, sometimes other NATO attach#s They were traveling in areas that were very “questionable.” Their Soviet counterparts wanted to discourage them from such trips, or just simple harassment.

Q: How can they be sure that it is “poisoning”?

MORGAN: You often can't be sure, which is why they the Soviets did it they way they did..

Q: What I meant was that when I was traveling in the Soviet Union, I personally suffered from food poisoning several times.

MORGAN: They know the way to do it! Or how about just plain bad food?

Q: They got me that time.

MORGAN: You don't know, nor did we always know. You often can't prove anything. By the time they get to our own doctor, so that the contents of their stomach can be analyzed, they're “clean”—they're purged. I don't know of anybody that died in one of these “drugging: episodes. But the object is to intimidate and/or ultimately to “get through” to you. They try to find out your weaknesses—whether sexual, or you can't stand to be around mice, or whatever. They do their best to “turn” you psychologically. Then, at the right time, they make the right offer to you, or simple blackmail. I'm rather proud of saying

that none of them ever succeeded in “turning” a Foreign Service Officer, or at least in Moscow. The “forces” did get through to one in Warsaw, using sex. Some of us didn't do as well. After you read the latest “spy” novel, or even non-fiction, you wonder whether the effort was worth all the resources that the KGB put in, particularly when they profited so seldom their efforts. But then, every Ames is worth it to them, as Penkovsky was to us..

In fact, the easiest target is one who is ideologically favorable to the Soviet Union, or just needs the money. That happened in a number of cases in the 1930's and 1940's, in the early days when communism seemed an attractive alternative to capitalism. But usually, like the Ames case, it's a matter of money, sex, or greed. Another motivation is that somebody is “mad” at his boss. The KGB would work on that. They would come across such a fact, and use it. Or they would try to trap your wife in some weakness or indiscretion; they would try to find something that would cause you to “step over the line.”

In most cases the harassment, including drugging, is intended to keep you “on edge” and to let you know who's “in control, the boss.” Let you know whose country you are in.

Q: What sort of regulations were you subjected to from the Soviet as well as the American side?

MORGAN: The Soviet side was easy. The number one technique was to use travel controls.

Q: What was that, specifically?

MORGAN: You couldn't travel more than 25 kilometers, I think it was—or 40 kilometers outside of Moscow without Soviet permission. You couldn't travel to certain areas at all—prohibited zones. A large part of Moscow and the “open areas” were also off limits. You couldn't take a trip without the permission of the UPDK (Uprovlenia po Diplomaticheskom Korpusom — Office of the Diplomatic Corps), a branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but really run by the KGB. So travel was a primary and specific means of control.

Q: Tell us about the procedures you would have to go through to get that permission.

MORGAN: You went first to one of our Foreign Service Nationals, Yelena, in our personnel office. A charming, highly qualified FSN, who we understood to be a Lt. Colonel in the KGB.. She would get you tickets to the Bolshoi ballet and various special cultural programs. She would do all of these “wonderful” things for you, like half a pint jar (you brought the jar) of Black Beluga caviar for $25, or was it $15?. Only she could do them. You couldn't go down to the Bolshoi Theater and buy, say, three tickets. I could try. Sometimes it worked but usually it didn't, especially if the box office found out you were a diplomat. She'd get tickets when nobody else could get tickets. So you used her. However, incidentally, she also took all travel itineraries when she got the tickets.

May I interrupt to tell a story. I was tutoring, doing some teaching, at the fourth grade of my grammar school behind my house where I know live in Alexandria, Virginia.. I had two Russian kids in the class—one from St. Petersburg, and the other one from Moscow. The parents of both of them came to the school for a “show and tell” night. One of the fathers came up to me and chatted at great length. He was asking me about my time in Moscow. I mentioned the UPDK. He said, “Ah, I was a junior diplomat in that office!” He said, “I didn't like to be mean to you diplomats.. I thought it was terrible, but it was my job. Today (at my job in the Russian Embassy in Washington) it is very hard to stop being communist and authoritarian!” You don't just undo all your previous life-style. His office is now in charge of commercial affairs.. He was thinking of quitting the service and going into business as a capitalist travel agent. But it's very hard to get that old way of doing things out of your system.

Yelena handled all of the travel for our Embassy officers. So you would give her an itinerary. When I was the Publications Procurement Officer, I laid out the travel plans myself. I didn't need permission from my superiors but I did send my proposed trip to other offices in case there were any projects I might do for others. We were supposed to “cover” the Soviet Union as well as possible. The travel money came from other sources. It wasn't

paid by the State Department, so we didn't have to worry about funding authority as much as other Embassy officers..

I would give Yelena my itinerary. Then you would wait and wait. Usually, the day before your scheduled departure she would phone and say, “Oh, Mr. Morgan, I'm very happy to tell you that there is room for you on the train.” or at the hotels. That was always the way she put it. Or, in the case of air travel, “We found a plane that goes there!” What it meant was that you had permission to go. Or sometimes she would say, “Oh, I'm sorry, Mr. Morgan, there's no room left on the train,” or, “Oh, Mr. Morgan, there's no plane that goes there!” That was the way they handled it. Sometimes an hour before I was to leave, she would call and say, “Oh, I made a terrible mistake! The train has been canceled.” So all of my plans went out the window, in terms of getting out of Moscow to do part of my job. It was very frustrating.

The same procedures and results happened for all of the other offices in the Embassy. So my next year in the political section our trips were subject to the whims of the Soviet authorities. Only then I also was subject to the fiscal strictures of the State Department.

I mention travel controls as the primary harassment thrown at us. There was just that idea of inefficiency mixed in with control over your daily lives. You weren't in charge. They were. And then the idea that your phones were “tapped,” or whatever you want to call it. The Soviets called it “regulations.” No way. It meant simply, “We will keep our eyes on you.” There were purely Soviet realities. For example, shopping for food on the local market. Although we used our commissary and imported food, we did try the open markets for some things, or just to get out and shop. My wife came back from the market one day with four, wonderful pears. I asked, “How much did you pay for them?” She said, “I paid $8 for these four.” I said, “Well, how much in rubles?” She said, “Well, 80; you divide by 10.” I said, “You don't divide by 10. It's the same thing as $80 for those four pears.” But everyone had to suffer that, obviously most Soviets. That was the system, I guess, not the regulations.

Whenever they wanted to “get” you, or you were doing something which they didn't consider proper, they would just “PNG” you—declare you “persona non grata.” If you had “crossed the line” — their line—they would say, “You are engaging in conduct not suitable for a diplomat.” That was always the term used. But I would argue that many of those :PNGed were in retaliation (reciprocity?) for one we had kicked out—for cause.The other half of your question concerned U. S. Government controls or regulations on us. I never felt really “controlled.” I never was told, “Do this or do that.” You were treated like an officer and a gentleman, if you will, well-trained linguistically and in area studies, etc. And everyone—all your bosses—treated you accordingly. Foy Kohler was my Ambassador during almost all of this period. He knew the Soviet system. He had been the head of the Voice of America. He knew what was expected of us. I never, ever, felt that someone was “directing” me. I might go to my bosses for advice and general instructions. I might say what had happened, or I would say that I was going on a trip and was seeking “input” on what I should look for in such and such a place or how best to undertake a project.

The only way I can really answer your question on U. S. controls on me while I was in the Soviet Union brings up a very interesting and fundamental question. And this point came clearly to me as I've pulled together the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training “Reader” or “Collection” of oral history interviews of fellow FSOs who have served in the Soviet Union. My impression from the views of others is that I think that it is fair to say that there are some with Soviet experience who might be considered as “soft” on the Soviets and people who are “hard” on them. A new Ambassador or supervisor would arrive. He would be looked at and, say, found to be very “rigid” and perhaps characterized as “anti-Soviet.” These are extremes I am dealing with in using such words. Obviously we were all more to the center and conversant with the complexities of the world we were dealing with. What I'm trying to say is that some FSOs were seen in terms of their over-all attitudes toward the USSR and Russia.

For example, take Ambassador Mac Toon. I had a series of bad experiences with him at an earlier stage, when he was my boss in the Political Section. We are talking now about inter-relationships in the Embassy, “control,” mechanisms and so forth. Mac just considered, in my view, that the Soviets were a bunch of SOB's. His attitude was, “Don't be fooled by anything they do. Don't have anything to do with the artists, don't have anything to do with other such groups, because they don't have power.” Really, I think, that attitude came, not so much from Mac's feelings about the Soviets as his impression that he was mistreated and misunderstood in his position on power—especially when he was Ambassador. We didn't serve together then at that later point.

Subsequently and since he's retired, he has just gone on and on, at great length, in the same vein. He was appointed the head of a presidential commission to look into allegations that the Soviets had held American “prisoners of war” from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. He was on television and radio a year or so ago. He came out with the same old stories. He said, “When I served in Moscow, especially as Ambassador, they didn't relate to me, they didn't share their information with me.” Well, of course they didn't. They had other people, they had other ways of conveying information to U.S. authorities. They didn't necessarily go through the American Ambassador in Moscow. So there was that kind of “school.” You can call them “hard liners” or people who had basically only bad experiences in the Soviet Union, who were “PNGed,” and who had reason to feel the way they do. Maybe they are a little “right wing,” maybe they are a little less “liberal,” if you will.

And then there are others, like Peter Semler, my colleague at Columbia and in Moscow, and a number of other officers, who knew and appreciated Soviet history and culture. They had more of a place in their hearts for the “Russian” side of things. I am exaggerating this in part, but there was that sort of feeling. I'm giving you this more for the real answer to the issue of “control” over the officers in our Embassy in Moscow I guess I'm sort of talking about “thought control”!!

Certain people were in positions of authority or influence, for example, military attach#s, bosses in the Political Section, the Ambassador, or the Deputy Chief of Mission. They would tend to react to what you had done—or not done. This could have been advance guidance or after the fact. You might have your hands “whacked” for having done something which the Ambassador, the DCM, or your boss felt was “uninformed.” They might say, “You almost asked to be arrested. You put the Embassy in a difficult position. Do you realize, Mr. Morgan, that the U.S. Government has spent two years training you for service in the Soviet Union? They've spent all of this money, and you're in a very important job. Now you're about to be 'PNGed.' Do you realize that all of this effort is now 'down the drain,' just because you did this stupid thing of walking up to this man on the street corner and chatting with him?” Obviously, I'm making up a “speech-story”. I wasn't PNGed. But there was that anxiety—especially felt by some of U. S. military people assigned to the Embassy in Moscow. They were in the most precarious position of being PNGed or doing something that State Department officials questioned.

The military were very daring and got themselves into very difficult positions. That's why some of them were “poisoned” at dinner, and so on. And the Ambassador would “go through the ceiling”—particularly with the military. Some of the military would think, “Who the hell does he think he is? He's supposed to be the American Ambassador. Why isn't he 'with' me on this?”

I've heard many stories about Ambassador Llewellyn “Tommy” Thompson and Ambassador George Kennan. They would say, perhaps, “Why did they 'blow' this thing? They know what the Soviets are like. They know that they're impossible to deal with rationally, in some ways. So deal with them as we know them. If you don't, you're going to be 'PNGed.'” Or, “You're going to create serious problems for the United States Government. In some cases just your being arrested or beaten up might have tremendous bilateral significance. It could even result in World War III, if you will.” That's what I'm trying to say in terms of U.S. control by the Embassy over what you do.

There was control. It was subtle control. It was a varied type of control. The only explicit controls that I can think of was that any time you met with a Soviet citizen, you were to report it to the Security Officer. That is security control. Most of us didn't do this. For example, I was in touch with Soviet citizens all the time. I wasn't going to prepare little memos about what the Intourist guide said or did to me, or whatever. I think that, in Kathmandu, Nepal, maybe, it's better to report something like this, but not in the Soviet context, where it happened repeatedly. Of course we did report to various elements in the Embassy, Security included, when we had something to say about the contact and the setting in which it took place. Full trip reports were of course made, but not to bookstores in MoscoThat's the only direct or technical control that I can think of.

However, as I said, there was all kinds of " indirect guidance."

Q: My impression is also that there was a requirement that you travel with another American.

MORGAN: Oh, yes. That's another form of control. Right.

Q: Were your travel companions limited to Americans or could it be with "good guys" people from friendly countries?

MORGAN: You could, in certain circumstances, travel with "good guys." I never traveled with non-Americans, but I know that some of the U. S. military did. I know that the American military often traveled with their Canadian counterparts, because they all were traveling all the time. They couldn't afford to "wipe out" their staff by requiring travel in pairs of Americans. However, it was largely Canadians and British—but not French.

Q: Where would the U. S. military travel and why?

MORGAN: Any place and every place that they could get to.

Q: To collect intelligence?

MORGAN: Oh, yes, or shall we call it information? That's the only reason that they were there in Moscow. They were not there to work out bilateral agreements with the Soviets or sell them arms, as we do in many other countries!

Q: While we're on the subject, I think that it's a good time to cover CIA's role at that time in Moscow.

MORGAN: Yes. CIA had what was called a small “Station” or group in Moscow. It just wasn't something one talked about, especially in-country. You knew who they were, in most cases. I don't think that I was ever surprised, because it was such a small group. You knew that the Embassy doctor was from CIA, because of the Penkovsky case. He was an Air Force doctor seconded to CIA. The Chief of Station, also served as the Embassy Security Officer. He and I took Russian language lessons together two times a week. The Russian teacher was there throughout the time I was in Moscow. She would just “pick” at me. A new Chief of Station arrived just before I left, Dick Stolz; a great guy who recently retired from the CIA in a most senior position. I must tell you a side-bar at this point. I mention his name because when he retired he did so with lots of publicity. He was in charge of the clandestine, “black”, side of CIA operations (the Directorate of Operations or DO). He was one of those mentioned concerning the Ames case because of his position..

Q: What does the “black” side mean?

MORGAN: Les, this is not an interview on the CIA. However, as is well publicized, the Agency is basically divided into Intelligence Research (Directorate of Intelligence) and Operations (Directorate of Operations). The “black” side is the Operations side, the DO. Q: Does the Operations side include “covert action”?

MORGAN: Yes, covert action. The other people are analysts who analyze books and other, written material, including reports from the field. Dick Stolz arrived shortly before I

left Moscow. We got to know each other right off. He said, “Bill, you know, I've got to do some travel. I'd like to go to Leningrad. I understand that you are going there on your final trip.” I said, “Sure, I'd be glad to go with you.” We got permission from the Soviets, in the sense I described above; that is, tickets etc. were available. We took off, and the plane landed at Leningrad airport. The pilot was maneuvering on one of the tarmacs. We were right in the middle of the main tarmac. We had landed and turned around and were about to move to the arrival gate. The pilot stopped the aircraft, right in the middle of the tarmac. Dick, sitting next to me, could see a plane landing—coming down onto our tarmac. Dick was a very responsible, level-headed person, with a lot of experience. He said, “Bill, isn't that plane coming down where we are?” I said, “Yeah, it looks like it.” He said, “But you don't seem concerned.” I said, “Oh, I guess I don't feel particularly troubled.” Well, this other plane kept coming down, and he said, “It's going to hit us!” I said, “It's a Soviet plane, and they can't afford to lose one.” So the plane that had been about to land pulled up and flew right over us! Dick and I were together in the Soviet Union for a month or so more. Every place we went he would tell this story. He said, “Some day I will really understand the Soviets when I know that they consider a plane more important than human lives or because they can't afford to lose one.”

The CIA had a very small Station in Moscow. It was in a very delicate situation. Obviously, I didn't know what they were doing, because I didn't have any “need to know.” You might wonder why they were the principal suppliers of the funds for publications procurement and why they didn't have their own people doing it. Well, they were indeed the biggest “consumers” of published Soviet material and had been given responsibility in the Washington intelligence community to do financial analysis on the Soviet economy, rather than leave it to their Station in Moscow to do. Obviously, they also were recipients of State and Agricultural Departments reports which did a lot of analysis All we had to do as Pops was to buy and package the books we bought and send them to the various Washington agencies. I should add that we also did periodicals but these we published routinely through Soviet sources. This free and efficient “flow” of information never became

a problem; our office subscribed routinely along with Embassy subscriptions. We always bought independently, and enthusiastically, periodicals to which you couldn't subscribe, say from the Republic capitals and large cities. Somehow, editors in the boonies seemed a bit freer, or perhaps naive, what they published so you got some interesting insights into Soviet life in the far-away places.

When we would get back to the Embassy the books up on a shelf in the basement. We had a shelf for “WF”, “LC,” (Library of Congress), Interior, State, etc.—and the names of all the other agencies which received books from us. I would open up the packages. Sometimes we'd only get half of the number I wanted.. The FSN packer, who had enough knowledge of the letters of the English alphabet to pack them, or keep them on the shelf if I indicated we needed to get some more :”to meet our quota”. He understood that! Once a week—I think that it was every Monday—Igor, or whatever his name was—would pack them up in bundles for shipment in the diplomatic pouch..

I don't think that I had to make any accounting for the books. In Washington they took what they got, gratefully, and bills went out. Once in while I'd get a cable or letter singling out some 'treasure” they particularly appreciated, or a gentle “reminder/reprimand” if we strayed from target. (50 copies of “Gone with the Wind”?)I only went to the Eastern European countries twice during my service in Moscow to encourage and give guidance to the part-time PPO's. That's how I got “approached in Bucharest!

It wasn't a CIA “operation” at all. The CIA was just the principal “consumer” of books and publications and the paymaster. However, the State Department would “go wild” when they received some of these books. You can go to the Library of the State Department today and find some of those books on the shelves there. They continue to flow to the State Department—probably not as many books, though. This program, during my time in Moscow, involved looking at virtually every book that was published. To use that position as “cover” for a CIA agent could have been very dangerous. It's very hard to do the PPO job, which is a full-time one. Think what would have happened if that person's other job

were “blown.” What would happen to the PPO job? It would just stop. You don't walk into that position easily. It was, traditionally, a Foreign Service job, and it was a good one. You need to know Russian, you travel, and you get to know Moscow and other cities as much as possible. We picked up our own “sense” of what was going on. I would do reports for the Political, Economic and Military Sections on things I had seen.

Q: While we're at it, could you tell me a little bit about the Embassy itself? What was the staffing and what were your relations with the people in the different parts of the Embassy?

MORGAN: During the time I was a PPO, I the FSN who wrapped up the books. He had some other functions as well, in Admin as I remember. I don't think that he was really a KGB agent, the poor soul. But, God love him, he had a terrible case of “B. O.” I had an American administrative assistant who would not go down to that room when he was there. She could “smell” him.

We also had a nicely equipped Embassy library, run by an FSN, under my “guidance”; obviously me, I was the book man.. She told me one day that she had been a colonel in the KGB. She'd been “demoted” and threatened with dismissal by the KGB because she hadn't gotten enough information out of us. The Soviets were going to demote her to captain, or something like that. She was in tears and went on and on. She asked if I could do something. I think that her name was Yelena. She asked, “Couldn't you give me some little, interesting things that I can give to my bosses?” I told her to make up any stories she wanted. She continued on her job in the library and I never heard anything more. I guess she must have satisfied the KGB with U.S. “disinformation”.

Then we had an Embassy wife who worked as our American part-time administrative staff person who kept our books and did our travel vouchers. She worked with us and helped downstairs, when “he” wasn't there..

On paper (to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs and on the diplomatic list) I was assigned to the USIA operation. Officially, there was no USIS (United States Information

Service) operation (in the Embassy in Moscow). I did some of the cultural exchange program work. The Soviets considered USIA as a propaganda agency and would only accept USIS's work in Press and Cultural Exchanges. They were aware that I also worked for USIA. Rocky Staples, Public Affairs Office and in charge of the USIA operation, was my immediate boss. As one of my USIA assignments, I took the Robert Shaw Chorale all over the Soviet Union—right in the middle of the Cuban Missile Crisis, which was a fascinating story in itself. I took professors from the University of Michigan down to Chechen Ingush Autonomous Republic(s) which nobody ever heard of and never would have, except that Chechnya happens to be in the newspapers these days.. Such escort assignments gave added credence to my position. The Soviets liked it that way, too. I think they thought Publications Procurement belonged better in Cultural Affairs. We had a fairly “open” cultural exchanges program with the Soviets for many years.

Now on to my second year in Moscow: The Political Section had a Political Counselor, with Internal and External Political Units. I served in the Internal Political Unit. The officers assigned to that unit were the “Kremlin Wall” watchers, so to speak, dealing with internal Soviet matters. The External Unit was concerned with Soviet relations with third countries —such as Indonesia, Cuba, and so forth. During my time in the Political Section the Political Counselors were Dick Davies and then Malcolm (Mac) Toon. There were two senior Political Officers under them as deputies and then a batch of Junior Officers. These junior officers were Jack Matlock, Peter Bridges, Bill Luers, and myself, under the boss, Ken Kerst, a U.S. Civil Service employee from INR (Bureau of Intelligence Research) and a specialist in Soviet affairs. He was a wonderful person and a superb boss. Going back in this interview when we talked about bosses, I talked about Kerst as a sophisticated and human leader. He understood all of the complexities about the Soviet Union. He knew how to deal with and lead us as younger, inexperienced but learning FSOs. One of my colleagues, Peter Bridges, followed the arts and the literary types. He had a real challenge; his job was to talk to people that we weren't supposed to talk to, at least under

our boss's boss's directions. That's a throw away thought, but an excellent example in my mind of how we did our job and under certain controls and leadership pressures.

The External Unit of the Political Section had, as I remember, a leader and two FSOs at the mid-to junior levels as was I and my three colleagues in Internal. They had area expertise, Africa and China/Vietnam. They all concentrated on USSR-rest of the world relations and how they affected the U.S. This involved such complex topics as Cuba, Vietnam, NATO, Disarmament, China, et al.

Dick Funkhouser, fellow Russian language student from FSI, was the Economic Counselor. Under him, we had an Agricultural Attach# from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, with an assistant as well. Finally, in the Economic Section, were Commercial and Science Officers and a State Department FSO Economic Officer.

The Administrative Section was relatively large. Jim Moran was the Administrative Counselor. He was great, because he really knew what the administrative function was all about and he also knew how to deal with people. He had a bunch of young FSO's assigned to him. We had some Foreign Service Staff people, including a Budget and Fiscal Officer and a Security Officer. We had a Personnel Officer who was from the Staff Corps but also had Jack Perry, an FSO going through this multi-assignment two year program. I would say that about half of the people in the Administrative Section were Foreign Service Staff specialists and the other half were on the first part of their tour as language and area FSOs. They went to the Administrative Section instead of being Publications Procurement Officers or working in the Consular Section.

The Consular Section, was headed by Tom Fain, fellow language and area colleague; he stayed in that position for two years. In those days the Consular Section was busy and important. Not that it isn't always important, but it was a particularly challenging job at the time. There were a lot of Americans who had come to the Soviet Union in the 1920's and 1930's and had become Soviet citizens but who now wanted to go home to the U.

S., especially people from Soviet Armenia. There was total Soviet control of all exits from the Soviet Union for everybody. “Tourists” didn't exist. There were “official” visits, all tightly controlled, all on a “quid pro quo” basis. For every Soviet scientist who visited the U. S. you had an American scientist who could come to the Soviet Union. The Soviets going to the U. S. were all well briefed on the “evils” to anticipate in that capitalist country. Additionally, most Soviet travelers were ineligible for an American visa since they were members of the Communist Party. So it was necessary to obtain waivers from the U. S. Attorney General for these Soviet scientists, for example, to get a visa to enter the U. S. In addition to Tom Fain, Jack Matlock was the other Consular Officer there for my first year.

There were two officers and a very excellent, support staff of four or five Russian FSNs. Excellent, but also KGB officers. Nevertheless, since there is something absorbing and demanding about consular work, I sensed, and learned from what my colleagues said and I could see, that maybe these Foreign Service Nationals were quite proud of working at the American Embassy. Incidentally, the Soviet authorities got more valuable information from then concerning those wishing to leave the U.S., Soviet or American. We certainly knew that they reported back to the KGB on anyone who came into the Consular Section. There were problems, of course, with those affected by such information.

There was an American Catholic priest who surfaced many years after his arrival in the Soviet Union; most of the time he was in a prison in Siberia. We finally got the Soviets to release him out solely because of a Civil Service employee back in Washington in SOV (Soviet Affairs) in the State Department. She kept after Embassy offices and in SOV to get him out. There were other prisoners—people who had “vanished.” All of them were entitled to protection as American citizens, except that the protection of Americans in the Soviet Union is quite a limited, to put it mildly.

Q: When I visited the Soviet Union, I met a man who was working as an electrician in the building where my company was located. He was an American named John—I can't remember his last name. He had come over to the Soviet Union in the 1920's. His parents

had brought him over as a child. He was “stuck” in the Soviet Union. The authorities wouldn't let him out. Now he's 70 years old and can barely speak English.

MORGAN: There were a lot of people like that, especially in Soviet Armenia. The minute we went into a hotel restaurant in Yerevan, Armenia, we'd be surrounded by all of these guys speaking Brooklyn English. They had been brought over to the Soviet Union as kids and had grown up there. They were brought to the Soviet Union by their parents for ideological reasons. Armenians, as you know, were given a special welcome by the Soviets. But the family kept their English, and their accents!

Q: I wonder if you could tell us if you ever encountered or can mention any first hand incident with American citizens or former American citizens who were “kept” in the Soviet Union. Were there any particular problems that we had to deal with or any “sticky” issues in this connection?

MORGAN: Not at first hand, because I was not in the Consular Section. There were stories I got at second hand and have forgotten them. These were traditional cases, except for those which I became acquainted with when I was on the Soviet desk in the Department on my next assignment. There was Virginia James, the Civil Servant I mentioned above who worked for years there. It was part of her “job” to take care of issues like this. Basically, she was involved in consular “support” activity. Specifically, on this Catholic priest, I was on the Soviet Desk and became aware that we needed an American “detained” in the Soviet Union to exchange with a Soviet. I was involved in “exchanges” of “prisoners” when in SOV and the U..S. had decided to return a Soviet citizen that the Soviets wanted back and we had no problem releasing. As a quid pro quo, they would return an American. So Virginia James said, “It's got to be Father So-and-So!” I don't know how long it had been, but after 30 some years that this priest had been held in the Soviet Union. She really, through her persistence, caused it to happen. They probably thought that we were idiots to ask for a priest, but we did.

I don't have anything else to mention from my first year and in general about Moscow.

Q: OK, one last question about your days as a PPO. Can you tell us what you really got out of it? What did you learn from being a PPO?

MORGAN: I was able to travel and I got everything that goes with travel. I had more freedom than most of my colleagues to get out and see Russians and other people of Soviet nationality. I got to see the Soviet Union—every republic in it. Central Asia will always have a special place in my heart. And that goes for Siberia, Lake Baikal and the vastness of the frozen north. I will never forget this experience. It's different. But you could get to hate it in some ways because of the Soviet bureaucrats and general inefficiency of the system. You always had these Intourist guides with you. They were generally “horrible” people.

Q: I don't think that you mentioned that you had to travel with a guide as well.

MORGAN: Well, I didn't exactly travel with a guide. I traveled with my companion from the Embassy. However, once we got to our destination, we had to deal with “Intourist,” the Soviet national travel agency, so called, to get a taxi or a car, to take a local tour of the area, to get a service at the hotel, or to do anything. They were at “your service”. Not that they were good at watching you at all times. They didn't go with me to the bookstores. I would explain to the Intourist guide that I was going to spend the day at bookstores. He or she would say, “I don't understand why you do that. What a waste of time! I could go and buy a book for you.” They did anything they could do to harass you, if you will, or to find out what you really do when you're buying the books. He wanted to know where the books would go. The Intourist guide would say, “Tell me, Gospodin Morgan, exactly who are the customers.” I would say, “Come on, Sonya, or whatever the guide's name was, don't be so dumb to ask such a straightforward question.” Then I would think, “Oops, I shouldn't say that. I could get PNGed” Under stress you could get so angry and frustrated that you might make an “provocative” (they loved the word “provokatzy”) remark].

Or you might have to bunk with three Soviet travelers who were completely drunk. You couldn't sit at just any table in a restaurant. If just any Russian sat with you, innocently or for the excitement of it, the Intourist guide, or maitre-d' would say, “Oh, no, they really don't want you to sit with them”. Then we might start a provokatzy!

Or take the little lady, actually she was huge, fat and not really too lady-like, that we in Odessa. This was when I was in the political section and I was traveling with a USIA officer. We took a ship from Odessa to Sochi just North of the border between the Russian and Georgian Republics. Or was it to Batumi in Georgia?.

We were having dinner one night in Odessa when this “lady” in question, and a very young and attractive woman came over and sat down near us. Well, you know, it was so obvious what happened that it became pathetic. They approached our table and said, or at least the “trainer” did, that they wanted to practice their English because they were learning it. The conversation, not to mention the antics, became ridiculous. My traveling companion, Jerry Prehn, and I had a couple of glasses of wine. About that time our inhibitions were lowering[. We finally said to the two women, “Look, you've gotten about as much out of us as you can. Go back and tell your bosses what you did. We will send you a letter of recommendation, but please, enough is enough. You are being very amateurish and doing a very poor job of picking us up.” The older woman said, “Oh, don't say that! Look at this woman whom I am training. I'm trying to show her that I'm a model person and I want to help you Americans.” So we said, “Enough,” paid our bill, and walked up a hill, which was fairly steep, at a relatively fast pace, to our hotel. After us came “Mamma” with her so-called “daughter.” I said to Jerry, “Let's go a little faster.” So we did, and the poor lady just puffed in defeat. They both also were wearing shoes with high heels, because they were very “chic,” you know. They were very “kulturny”, you know. They finally couldn't keep up with us. The older lady was puffing. We turned around and waved goodbye. But they had tried!

Experiences like that really don't add greatly to oral history but they meant a lot to me at the time as revealing the realities of the USSR. I tell it to give you an example of how we had always to be on the alert, to be careful. You know, you didn't know whether that extra glass of wine or vodka would make you tell them what you really thought of the internal security system. It “controlled” you. That was their goal.

Q: Well, let's move on to your position as a Political Officer working on the internal affairs of the Soviet Union, beginning in September, 1963. Is that correct?

MORGAN: Yes, it sounds right. I had that job for a year.

Q: Tell us how your position was changed and why.

MORGAN: The Embassy made such internal assignments. If you were a language and area officer you weren't assigned to a specific job in Washington, just to replace a person scheduled to leave. However, I knew that I was going first to the PPO job, though I didn't know what I was going to do in the second year. That second assignment was handled by the DCM and the Ambassador, probably about half way through your first year, during which time they could see your strengths and weaknesses. There were openings coming up in other parts of the Embassy. There were openings coming up in the Economic or Political Section, in most cases. It was a “sore point” if you didn't get moved up to one of those positions. The officers were moved up were congratulated and you knew that you had made it on that “promotion list,” which is silly. However, that's life in any organization. There are certain jobs which are regarded as being “better” and more interesting and “main track, substantive” than others. The Political Section was one of those jobs. That spirit permeates the Foreign Service.

I was told that I was going to the “Internal Affairs Unit” of the Political Section. There my responsibilities included reading newspapers, because you couldn't meet anybody, except when you traveled, and then with difficulty. Even then, there's only so much that you can

talk about when you meet people. The farther you got out of Moscow, the more people would talk to you. I went to Central Asia. I could tell you story after story about people telling you how they feel. But these times were rare.

Dushanbe, capital of the Tajik Republic. was the locale of one of my favorite stories. I think that Jack Perry and I were “fellow travelers”.. I remember asking our waitress, a lovely and charming person in her 50's or 60's, where she was from. Americans are usually initially identified as coming from Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania. The local people thought that we had to be Soviets and certainly couldn't be Americans, because foreigners don't get to Dushanbe very often. The Baltic States are considered “sophisticated” and well dressed, as we appeared to the waitress.

The farther away you get from Moscow, the more relaxed the local people are. This woman was very pleased to talk to us. We told her a few stories in answer to her many questions of what it was like “out there”. Most questions begin with, “Is it true that...?” I noticed the meat skewers in our kebab that we were served (the only entr#e) were interestingly made. I told her, “Do you know that I spent an hour today at your market, trying to get some meat skewers? My wife would love to get some real, Central Asian meat skewers. Do you know where I might buy some?” This is before we were assigned to Beirut, where they have lots of skewers. She said, “Oh, yes, I can go to the chef. I'm sure that he has some skewers that he can sell you.” Shortly after that she reappeared very, very upset, with the chef right behind her. He wanted to meet an American, because she had obviously identified us.. He was great, and we had a nice, long chat. He said, “I understand that you are having some trouble getting skewers. Here we have a supply system which is insane, it's crazy, it's terrible.” Then he reached for the plate, shook off the skewers, and said, “These are for you.” I said, “How much?” He said, “Nothing! Do you think that I would charge you for this? Take these skewers and good health to you!” I still have those skewers to this day.

Such are the long-lasting memories you preserve from traveling in the Soviet Union. First, you learn about what people feel. That woman was in Dushanbe for one, simple reason. She said, “I had to get out of Leningrad. It was too controlled.” She said, “Out here I'm a waitress and I'm poor, but I'm free. I can say things that I want to say.” She had been a professor of English, I believe. Those are the kinds of things you learned. They are all fed into at least a trip report and perhaps into a larger report on a more general topic. You kept files. Other people in the Embassy might use them for something they were writing about. They gave reports a certain amount of local flavor and supporting examples.

I will give you one other example. I read newspapers from all of the republics, whenever we could lay our hands on them. I was responsible for military affairs, a large part of the Soviet power structure, and struggles, education, and all aspects of Soviet-American bilateral relations. We divided up the Soviet Union among the three of us in the Internal Affairs Unit of the Political Section. As I recall, I followed developments in Leningrad. I had been reading a biography of Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, who at the time was the leader of the Soviet Union. It was one of those rare books which, I think, the PPO gave me. It was relatively new. It was simple, pure, and unadulterated propaganda. However, I found myself—as I was supposed to do—focusing on what might be new or little known about him, as well as any between the lines insights into what made him tick, or at least the author thought about him. After all, all leaders can be succeeded. That's the kind of thing the Political Section does.

I read other newspapers from Leningrad, including the “Vyechorka,.” slang in Russian for the evening newspapers, which are published in most of the larger cities. They are real “gossip sheets,” comparatively speaking. That's where you can often find out what is really going on, or at least between the lines. They are controlled by the Communist Party or the local government, of course. But they also focus on movie and theater schedules and have a lot of local “goings on,” the equivalent of Soviet gossip, less ponderous reporting. So I was reading the “Vechernaya Leningrad.” It carried a letter to the editor from an leading

educator in the city. It didn't exactly complain, but you could read between the lines. Whenever you read Soviet newspapers, you had to read between the lines, of course. I looked for this “hint.” I gave it [the article] to one of my colleagues, who said, “Well, you look for one word.: “odnaka”—”however”, in English. There was extensive praise about Nikita Sergeyevich and how great a leader he was. Then another paragraph began, “Odnaka”. That's when you start reading carefully. In fact, that's the only reason you read the newspapers. [Otherwise, you couldn't possibly get through all of the garbage that was there.

You look for the “counter arguments,” if you will, which begins with, “However.” The article continued, “However, Nikita Sergeyevich is making a great mistake,” or words to that effect —obviously not that strong—in his educational reform program. But the article said things like, “Vice Minister So-and-So,” who was Khrushchev's “follower, stooge” Khrushchev had really put forward this new educational program. I mean it was a real reform, a masterful, “liberal” reform. So I went in to my immediate boss, Ken Kurst and I said, “It might be that this is a real complaint.” He agreed and said, “Draft a telegram.” And I did. I drew some material from this book which I was reading and pulled it all together as a sort of report due at an appointed time. As you know, that is what most reporting is. It is not someone's immediate reaction to something. In reporting from the Soviet Union it is mostly “think pieces” which have developed over a period of time. This report was on education.

Mac Toon, who was the Political Counselor and Ken's immediate boss, threw the telegram back to me and put a note on it: “See me.” “Do you really believe this? Do you really think that this is indicative of weakness in the Soviet structure?” I said, “Well, I'm just reporting what I saw in this article,” and how I had come to the conclusion I did. I was indeed my defensive self, especially in front of strong-man Toon. These aren't the exact words that Mac used with me, but he said, “If you insist, I suggest that you put it in an Airgram,” a slow way by mail of getting words back and probably not read in Washington, at least by the people in power. I went back to Ken and said, “I'm not happy. I don't think this is right.” He said, “You know, Mac feels strongly that he's not around to train you.” I said,

“Then who trains me?” Ken answered, “Well, he feels that he's above that.” I'll never forget that. Hopefully, I kept that with me for the rest of my career. That is, you are there to train subordinates, no matter who you are, the Ambassador or anyone else. Ken said, “Well, Mac won't sign off on a telegram.”

That was in late August, early September, 1964, just before I was leaving. I had the “pleasure,” one month or so later, at the most, while painting my fence on Home Leave to hear on the radio that Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev had fallen. You can imagine my reactions. Such silly things as, “if only I could have gotten that draft telegram approved.” On the other hand, perhaps it shows you how people react to bosses sometimes and way we run things.

The final answer to your question about what the Political Section does or how I functioned in it is that the highlight of that year was Khrushchev's political decline and demise, and we didn't see it coming. The highlight of the previous year, when I was PPO, was when we declared an embargo on Cuba. I was the only foreign diplomat permitted to travel during that time. I was in Leningrad with the Robert Shaw Chorale. I was assigned to be the escort for the group to a number of cities in the Soviet Union—I think, five or six.

Q: Can you tell us what the Robert Shaw Chorale is?

MORGAN: Robert Shaw is one of our great, American conductors. He was the conductor of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra at the time. He was subsequently with the Atlanta Symphony. I think that he is retired now, or close to it. He also established a choir, which he developed during the years when he conducted symphony orchestras in various cities. His chorale was a group of about 50 or 60 singers. They are magnificent—probably the best in the United States. They came to the Soviet Union under our Cultural Exchanges Program. I think they were the first group of that size to come to the Soviet Union under that program. Among other things they performed the Bach B Minor Mass which, of course, made people fall apart when they heard it. That was on the program performed in

Leningrad. They also did a lot of American folk music, classical and religious choral work. But the Bach B Minor Mass the peak of it all.

I was with the Chorale for about weeks or longer—a long time—as “escort officer”, which means the official, Embassy person who goes along to give them guidance and support and solve problems if they arise. Goskoncert is the Soviet agency responsible for all concerts and musical shows in the Soviet Union. It is in charge of all the logistics and overall management of the tours.. We had a delightful man from Goskoncert, who really ran the show, of course with the help and arrangements of the local representatives. I was just a little American Embassy presence and make sure the group was not “mislead” or got into any serious troubles. Some called me their “Nanny”. I didn't actually do much except keep Robert Shaw as sober as I could and the group from squabbling with each other, as artists tend to do.

A few of the members of the Chorale were of Russian ancestry or actually had emigrated. They wanted to see the “motherland”. The Soviets loved the performances. People stood in line for 24 hours at a time, waiting for tickets. Often high Soviet and local society was present. The Russians appreciated the beautiful music the Chorale performed and the simple fact that an American group of such caliber was in the USSR.

At the end of the program of Leningrad, the center of culture in the Soviet Union, or at least the Leningraders thought so, there was a standing ovation that lasted for 30 or more minutes. People would not sit down and would not stop clapping. They were doing the Russian-style, synchronized clapping. Robert Shaw was up there, bowing and getting all of the members of the Chorale to bow with him. He was in tears. I was in tears every time I attended one of their performances and watched the appreciated Soviet audience.

MORGAN: In the middle of the Leningrad performance of the Robert Shaw Chorale, I got a telephone call from Bob German, my deputy, at the Embassy. He said, “There's a little something going on that I think you should know about, which you can read about in the

papers.” I said, “Well, I did look at 'Pravda.'” Bob continued, “Well, actually, the United States has proclaimed a quarantine around Cuba. All diplomats of every nation have been recalled to Moscow.” I said, “OK, Bob, what do you want me to do?” He said, “What would you like to do?” I said, “Well, I'll tell Bob Shaw. I don't know what his reaction will be, but I'd prefer to stay with the Chorale. We still have a couple of performances. I'll call you right back.”

So I went to see Bob Shaw. He said, “That's too bad. If you're withdrawn, you can tell the Embassy that I will not perform another note. I'm going to pack up the Robert Shaw Chorale and leave for the United States. You can tell them that.” I said, “Well, our Soviet hosts have to know about this.” There was this poor, sweet old guy whom I told. He said, “You cannot do this!” He was a man of the arts who genuinely seemed to love us very much. So he said, “I must make my [phone] call.” So I said, “Go ahead and let me know.” He came back in a few minutes and said, “Yes, it is true. My government has called all diplomats back to Moscow.” I said, “What did they say?” He said, “They said that they would make no exception for you.” Well, I said, you'd better find out because I'm about to call my Embassy. After a short while my Soviet colleague came to be and said that his authorities had said they would reconsider their decision. I called Bob German back and said, “I've had a Soviet reply; I presume that you've been doing something from your side.” He confirmed that the Ambassador had called the Foreign Ministry, but it was unwilling to make any exceptions. I told Bob that apparently, the Soviet authorities were having an internal communications problem. Bob agreed but added that he understood that every diplomat was back in Moscow, except me In about an hour Bob German called with the words: “The Soviet Foreign Ministry has withdrawn their demand, you may stay with the Robert Shaw Chorale, and they may continue with their program.”

Before and after this “mini crisis” Bob German and I had done a little “double talk,” although I'm not sure how “double” it was. Bob's real message was, “keep your eyes open.” He hoped that there would be no anti-American demonstrations or activities because of the Cuban events. I said, “On the contrary, I think it is the opposite.” I also

understood him to be telling me to keep my eyes on the Soviet ships in the Leningrad harbor. I knew that if the ships set sail, that would indicate that there were some problems with the Soviets militarily reacting to the Cuban missiles crisis. But our indications, apparently through Penkovsky, were that the Soviets didn't intend to do anything. The Soviet ships already en route to Cuba would reverse course and in fact honor the quarantine. So I would reported to the Embassy over the next few days in “double talk” on the location of Soviet Navy ships in Leningrad; they were not moving, nor was there any anti-American demonstration. Nothing. All was incredibly calm.

I thought about this later as I was reading a front page story in the “New York Times.” It reported that I was the only American diplomat who had not returned to Moscow, that the status of the program of the Robert Shaw Chorale was probably indicative of the trend of events, and that the Soviet Union was not about to do anything “inflammatory,” for whatever reasons.

That happened in October, 1962, during my first year in Moscow. I'm giving you that anecdote in response to your question about what happened when I was in the Political Section. I said that I would have to go back in time to my PPO days and tell you one of my best “political” tales: the “Cuban Missile events.”

Against this background, the next dramatic bilateral event that took place occurred when I was in fact in the Political Section. That was the assassination of President Kennedy in November, 1963. I've already told you how my wife was involved in that and how the Soviets really showed their grief. During the actual assassination, we were at the Embassy “dacha” (country house), outside of Moscow, a place where you could go to relax. The Ambassador had a “dacha,” and, adjoining that, was a “dacha” for the rest of the Embassy staff and their families. It had about 4 or 5 bedrooms We were there with Tom Fain and his wife and were enjoying the evening very much.

I had gone to bed. I was awakened by my wife who said that Jack Perry had just called from the Embassy. The President was dead. He had been assassinated. Ambassador Kohler had issued special instructions to everybody. Tom Fain and I were part of “everybody,” and the Embassy knew that we were at the dacha. We were told that, under no circumstances, were we to display any outward feelings toward any Soviets about this incident—in the sense of who might have killed President Kennedy, why he was killed, or anything else. Not that we would be dealing with any Soviets, but this was an extraordinarily delicate time. I think that Jack said this over the tapped phone for the obvious reasons since the Soviets already were being seen by some as behind the assassination. Some people at home were apparently saying this was done deliberately, and some were merely speculating. When we got back to the Embassy, I remember Ambassador Foy Kohler talking to us and to the American staff of the Embassy in general, about the delicateness of the times. He said how final this was. There would be lots of rumors and accusations and we were in the heart of the activity.

In that context a couple of weeks later—maybe it was a couple of months—the DCM, the Deputy Chief of Mission, Walter Stoessel, called me up to his office and said, “Bill, I've just had a call from my counterpart over in the British Embassy. The British had a 'walk-in,' a Soviet citizen, who says that he knows who killed the President.” This man had defected from the KGB and was in the British Embassy, seeking protection. The British had a Russian language officer there to interview him, and they wanted someone from the American Embassy to be present as well, for obvious reasons.

Three hours later, after a very lengthy interview with this Soviet defector, the British decided to release him. They said that they couldn't give him any kind of protection there. They let him out the back door of the British Embassy so that he could escape, if he were legitimate. Obviously, the fundamental question which my British colleague and I were trying to determine was whether he was a legitimate defector. The Soviet talked at length about Lee Harvey Oswald, and his Soviet wife whom he said he knew well in Minsk. The

defector was trying to make the case that Oswald, and particularly his wife, were KGB agents. He said that Oswald had killed President Kennedy on orders from the Soviet KGB. This was pretty heavy stuff.

I went back to the American Embassy and told Walter Stoessel what had happened. Like a good boss, he said, “What do you think? Do you think he is telling the truth?” I said, “Walter, I don't know. Frankly, my greatest concern was whether I got every word right which the defector had said.” Here we were, talking to somebody who was rattling away in Russian. I had agreed with the British Embassy officer that he and I would sit down afterwards and talk it over, comparing notes to make sure that we had the right verbs and nouns, etc., to see what we were sure he said and to compare our conclusions.

So we did this afterwards. As I remember, my British Embassy colleague and I pretty much agreed that we couldn't conclude he was a “legitimate” defector or a KGB “plant”. To carry out his defection the way he did certainly tilted our opinion to the view that he was a “plant.” You can't get into any Embassy in Moscow—British or American—without having to walk past Soviet guards. He came into the British Embassy via a back entrance. But he was there and we did hear what he said, but it was only his story, all verbal.

Q: So what made you virtually certain that he actually knew all of that much about the case? I think that the name of Oswald's wife was Maria (Marina?).

MORGAN: Yes, that was a question. I guess that we were more satisfied on that matter. But then, again, he could have been “briefed” on how to do the whole thing. So I sent off a report on the interview, through Walter Stoessel. We had asked the State Department how this information should be submitted; to whom. It wasn't really a “normal” Embassy report on the Soviet Union. It was somewhat “privileged” information, concerning the assassination of President Kennedy. As I remember, we were instructed to send it to the Warren Commission. It went out as an Airgram.

Nothing ever happened as a result of this report. I've been waiting to be called since then. When I was Deputy Director of the Visa Office 15 years later, I got a call from a person I had inspected in Mexico City. She was on the Mexican desk in the State Department. She said, “I need your authorization for something.” So I went over to her office. The subject was my Airgram on the interview with this alleged Soviet KGB “defector”, which was in files sent to her from Mexico City concerning Oswald's days in Mexico. The Warren Commission or post Warren Commission phase keeps going on and on.

Q: This was on the role of the KGB in Mexico?

MORGAN: Something like that. My Airgram surfaced, having obviously got to Embassy Mexico City because it concerned Oswald. I think that there was a request for material under the Freedom of Information Act or a Congressional inquiry. I had to “sign off” on reducing the security classification I had put on the original document. I had to agree that making this information public would not endanger U.S. security, etc. I was so embarrassed to see this report after so many years. I thought, “Did I write so poorly while in Moscow? This language is terrible! Even the spelling is off. How did Walter Stoessel ever let me send this report off?” That was my chief concern. My initial concern had been my Russian language ability. My second concern was my English language ability in drafting the report. Ego does play a part of our professional careers. I'm sure that the document was released. That's the end of my Oswald story, and that piece of history.

Q: It might be a little beyond the scope of this interview, but what would be the purpose of a Soviet “plant,” claiming that Oswald was working for the KGB?

MORGAN: That's a very good question. At the time, I'm sure that I had a detailed answer to it. However, thinking about it now, perhaps the objective was to create confusion, to mislead, and to test the British Embassy's handling of “informants”. Perhaps they also were testing the American reaction. Those are a few ideas which come off the top of my head. Because it wasn't an “authorized” KGB operation—I'm assuming that it was a “plant

—it had to be done by the KGB. Remember that the KGB at that time, under Khrushchev, probably was more “sensitive” to criticism. Probably, it was more “sensitive” to whatever role it did play. We do know some things about Oswald and his wife and his connection with the KGB, etc. “Disinformation” is often used to mislead or to try to confuse you. You may recall from the days of World War II that there was a view that we should “give the [Abwehr] highly detailed information so that Germany would fall from the weight of this information, since they wouldn't know how to file it all.” There is that consideration. However, finally, I don't know. It may have been stupidity, and the Soviet Union was fond of intrigue and complexity. Don't forget that a lot of the things they did were just “dumb.” Is that enough for this interview?

Q: Yes. Let's turn now to the post-Moscow period , which was in the fall of 1964. Is that correct?

MORGAN: Yes. About September, 1964, the point when Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev fell from power.

Q: You were assigned back to the Department of State to work as a desk officer in the Office of Soviet Union Affairs. How did you get the assignment?

MORGAN: Routinely, in the sense that most of us in those days who had served in the Embassy in Moscow were “lined up” for a job in INR (Bureau of Intelligence Research), working on Soviet Affairs, a job in the USSR Exchanges of Persons program, or the Soviet desk in the Bureau of European Affairs. Most of us went to the latter, unless we were highly specialized, like a petroleum or science officer or something like that—or came from some other place. But those of us who were “trainees”, if you will, or were involved in a two-year language and area studies assignment in Moscow, would go to one of those positions. I was assigned to SOV (Office of Soviet Union Affairs).

Q: Tell us about the office and how it was set up. Some of our readers may not be so familiar with the State Department. What exactly is a “country desk”? You might think

of people sitting around a table who were the greatest experts in the world on a given subject.

MORGAN: Well, we were. That's characteristic of the State Department. It still has “tables of experts.” However, the real answer to your question is that the Department of State, to put it very simply, is basically cut into two parts. One is composed of “functional” bureaus, and the other is geographic bureaus. The functional bureaus include consular, intelligence, economic, political-military, administration, general services, and so on. Those are all “functional” areas. They are big offices. They have “desks”, let's call them offices, where the specialists of varying degrees work. They are a combination of Civil Service employees and Foreign Service Officers and staff. The same is true of the geographic bureaus, which have both civil service and Foreign Service Officers. They are very much intermingled. However, the functional bureaus largely deal with their [particular] function. The Consular Bureau, for example, has to carry out the laws dealing with consular affairs —visas, the protection of Americans [overseas], and passports.

The geographic bureaus cover the world, which is broken down into geographic areas: Europe and Canada, East Asia, South Asia, the Near East and North Africa, South of the Sahara Africa, and Latin America. Those are the geographic bureaus. Within each one of these geographic bureaus are subordinate offices, sometimes called desks if the office is confined to one country.. SOV is part of the Bureau of European Affairs, although it also covers that part of the former Soviet Union, now mostly Russia, which extends into Asia. In fact, responsibility for Moscow is assigned to the European Bureau. Canada was under the European Bureau, but finally, the Canadians “got their independence” and the Bureau of European Affairs became the Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs. Within the European Bureau there are many desks. SOV had about 12 officers assigned there, plus eight or so support staff, including secretaries and clerical help. We focused on the Soviet Union, which in turn was broken down into three parts within the Office of Soviet Affairs. First was Soviet Bilateral Affairs, to which I was assigned. It dealt only with U.S.-U.S.S.R. relations in all of their dimensions. Another section was Soviet Multilateral Affairs,

which dealt with U.S.S.R.-third country or international organizations such as NATO, UN affairs and how they affected the U.S. interests. Soviet-U.S. economic issues was the third element of SOV and was a very small office consisting of two or three officers. This is not to be confused with the Economic Bureau of the Department!. Yes, they all worked together, but this was a specialized area within SOV, the Soviet “desk.” It focused largely on Soviet agricultural and economic affairs. In my Soviet Bilateral Affairs section I was deputy to Carroll Woods, the director. We had two other, more junior officers, neither of whom had served in the Soviet Union. Also was Virginia James, about whom I spoke above and, as a Civil Service employee, had served in SOV for many, many years. She largely followed issues with a need for continuity, like people in jail, for example.

In turn, to go on with your question, we divided responsibility for specific aspects of our bilateral relations among the three or four officers in SOV. Carroll Woods, as the Office Director, was involved in all of issues and some topics he was especially interested or qualified in. As one of the three Office Directors in SOV, he reported to the head of the Soviet “desk,” who was, my first year, David Henry. Mac Toon succeeded him. There was also a Deputy Director. They took care of the larger problems that related to the Soviet Union, many of which started with us subordinates or at least were tracked on a routine basis until they escalated to the bosses, including the White House. I have read with great interest of recent efforts to “de-layer”—remove supervisory personnel—the bureaucracy. It's not easy, as you naturally report through your own channels to bosses of more authority, and hopefully more skills and knowledge. There were numerous such layers at that time. Nevertheless, I reported to Carroll Woods, period. Once in a while I would find myself taking guidance or direction directly from Toon or Henry or even from an Assistant Secretary of State—although that was most extraordinary. The structure was very “layered.”

Finally, there were my specific “areas of competence”, as we called them. Whether I was really “competent” or not didn't matter; the desk called them that. They included maritime, military and general consular affairs. I also followed the activities of those “spying” Soviet

diplomats as they maneuvered around our society. I looked into such things as violations of their travel status. Another responsibility of mine was the control of travel by Soviet diplomats in the U. S.. This was a result of the Soviets' restricting our travel and access the Soviet Union. I did the same thing against them, in “retaliation”. I made sure that in the case of any diplomatic note which came from the Soviet Embassy to the State Department, advising of the travel plans of Soviet diplomats, that the local authorities in whatever state knew that they were coming there and what they were coming for. And I “made note of” and advised them in writing when they violated the approved itinerary. That was a “black mark” against them.

Q: I think that I remember hearing that even until recently cities like St. Louis, Seattle, and other places that either had military installations or buildings with military significance, like the Boeing Company or McDonnell-Douglas aircraft factories, were “off limits” to Soviet diplomats.

MORGAN: I don't know specifically that those areas were “off limits” but let me use the case of the Boeing factory, because I think that it is a very good example of the difficulties of U. S. relations with the U. S. S. R. Certainly, this was the case in those days and up until the fall of the Berlin Wall, communism, and the Soviet Union.

Q: Do these restrictions continue today?

MORGAN: Yes, every nation has the right and obligation to guard its own national secrets. So if you have a naval base or an air force base, you “close” it. You “close” it also to Americans in that sense. I'm sure that today there still are special rules about keeping Russians or Poles or French or Canadians away from certain installations. They may be still today applied on the basis of reciprocity; I just don't know. Remember, there are two considerations here. We and the Soviets had the “need” to protect certain facilities. At the same time, some of the effort we exerted to keep the Soviets away from some installations was sheer “pressure” on them to give up their control on our diplomats in areas which, as

far as we were concerned, should have been “wide open.” There was no military interest in them at all. They just wanted to control us. I underscore that.

When the Soviets first applied a travel restriction on us—I should remember the date, but I do not—they started saying that you cannot go beyond a 40 kilometer (25 mile) circle of certain areas in the Soviet Union, Moscow for instance. You cannot travel to these areas. You must get permission to go any place else in the Soviet Union. There were certain areas which, by definition, were “closed.” You needed special permission to go there. Other areas were “open,” but you still had to get specific permission to travel there. All of that was a bore and a symbol of authoritarian controls by a totalitarian state of the worst sort. It was a symbol of a bureaucracy which had run “amuck.” I can assure you that an awful lot of these restrictions were cases of bureaucracy at its worst. It wasn't really that the Soviets wanted unnecessarily to harass us, although they enjoyed doing that very much. It wasn't to keep secrets. It was just the bureaucracy. This kept a lot of people very, very busy, watching where we were going and then turning over to the KGB all of this information so that they could follow us.

Obviously, the first purpose of these controls was to preserve secrecy, but it was also just to keep the system going. This was like winning World War II by inundating the Germans with too many documents. I think that the Soviet Union, in part, fell because of the heavy and inefficient bureaucracy—just plain inefficiency.

Seriously, though, those are some of the things I did on the Soviet desk for my two years there (1964-66). I had to follow where the Soviets went, constantly reminding them that we were not going to harass them. We did it largely to convince them that their excessive travel controls was a system which they should abandon. Of course, both sides had to protect those areas which were highly sensitive for military or other truly sensitive reasons. Remember that the Soviets thought that some of the areas which were “sensitive” were non-military in character or were “sensitive” for non-military reasons. They were embarrassed—or there were problems there that they wished to keep from foreigners, or

often from their own citizens. There may have been internal issues, not that a revolution was under way, but there were a lot of reasons to keep us out. They didn't want us to see certain areas, lest they be shown to be not up to standard, etc.

What we did was constantly work at them and remind them that, “Yes, you must ask permission to go to St. Louis. It's a wide open and wonderful city. The only reason that we are doing this is in reciprocity for what you have done to our Embassy people in the Soviet Union.”

Q: Can you tell us exactly how you would do that?

MORGAN: Yes. We did the exact same thing they did. Doesn't that sound awful. Every time that travel was scheduled to a university, a meeting, a lecture, or any other purpose Soviet diplomats in the U. S. were required to send us a diplomatic note with a schedule of the proposed trip. I would get the note and copies of the note would go out to the areas concerned and to U.S. government concerned agencies. If a Soviet diplomat were going to visit the University of California to make a speech on this or that subject, they had to put down the specific reason, the date, the method of transportation, and so on. This schedule was turned over to the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation), the University of California, and the local authorities (in California), so that they knew who was coming and what the purpose was. We would also confirm the schedule with the sponsoring group. Of course, under an agreement with the United Nations, anyone going to New York could not be restricted. However, we insisted on knowing when they were going and what the circumstances were.

If the purpose of the travel was in connection with a controversial meeting of some sort and the press had already learned of it, or there were groups opposed to that Soviet official going there, we might double check the circumstances and ramifications of the travel]. Sometimes I found myself caught between groups that wanted a Soviet representative at a meeting and groups which did not want him there. Going back to your

question about the aviation industry—a visit to the Boeing Aircraft factory in Seattle and so on—not all U. S. Government agencies were in agreement on how to handle such a matter. CIA might want one thing, the FBI might want something different, and the U. S. military might want something still different—or had different inputs into the reasons for making certain areas “out of bounds” for travel by Soviet diplomats. Some of the proposed travel resulted in long, inter-agency battles.

Q: Can you “walk us through” one such controversial case that you can remember—that really takes us through the decision-making process?

MORGAN: Well, as you can imagine, picking a specific case out of my memory is not easy, but let me walk you through the process. Then I'll either come up with one example and/or give you a typical case. First of all, not every single request for travel requires the approval of a huge “sea” of bureaucrats. Most of these requests were very, very routine and were approved without difficulty. Let's take first the case where only the State Department was concerned. That would involve reciprocity. We would have reason, because of a very bad case recently in Moscow, where the Defense Attach# ran into one of these very difficult situations in connection with, for example, a proposed visit of his to Vladivostok. We wished to retaliate. So our comparable “reciprocity” in this case would be to delay action on the next application by a Soviet diplomat to visit some place in the United States. This request might involve the simplest, most acceptable, proposed visit in the world. However, it well might involve an application for permission to travel by a man of relatively the same rank as our man in Moscow who had been denied permission to travel. In other words, we would try to find a case as similar as we could find. We usually we make no reference to the case in Moscow, at least by name, etc. That was our way of showing that we disapproved of the way the Soviets had handled a comparable case in the Soviet Union. But the Soviets knew, of course. In such cases the State Department acted on its own authority, in retaliation. Reciprocity is the word we would use. To say it today, thirty years later and post-USSR, it sounds a bit childish. But we were convinced

at the time it was an essential quid pro quo to get the Soviets to make changes in their system, if they wanted to “play with the big boys”.

Take another case involving the State Department and other U. S. Government agencies, but not in the intelligence community. Let's say that St. Louis University had invited some Soviet scientists to go out to St. Louis, as well as the Science Officer in the Soviet Embassy in Washington to join them. The Soviet scientists would come under the exchanges program. That would have been approved ahead of time—their itinerary, and so forth. Their visit came under my counterpart in the US-USSR Exchanges office. The Soviet scientists were in exchange for a comparable program of scientists from the U.S. going to the Soviet Union.. Both itineraries, their programs, and their leaders were all agreed to in advance, and visa applications submitted and approved, or turned down. My office was not directly, “operationally” involved, although both of us in the State Department went through the same process of U.S. clearance.

Now we have the case of the Science Officer of the Soviet Embassy wanting to join in at the program at the university. The embassy officer has received some previous bad local publicity. This all results in a tremendous, local brouhaha. The White House and several Members of Congress have gotten involved. There are various groups taking pro and con positions. We would find ourselves at the State Department—and this is something like approving a visa, if you will—working at this issue from the political point of view. Is it in the U. S. national interest to have this issue go one way or the other? The Secretary of State—and maybe the President—would have to decide. Many of these questions reach the very highest level. An issue like this is not an intelligence one, but a policy question, including the integrity of the Exchanges Agreement.

Q: Exactly how was that decision made? When you received such a request for permission for the Science Officer of the Soviet Embassy to attend a meeting, what did you do with it?

MORGAN: I “worked” the Science Officer's diplomatic note. I knew the purpose of his visit and the opposing views. I'd wrap the elements of the case into a “Decision Memo”, get clearances from all those with differing views, largely in the Department and then start the paper “upward”. I would probably make a recommendation. Cases like the one above were settled in the State Department, probably at the Assistant Secretary Level or maybe just by the Soviet desk. In some cases a functional bureau, say, the Consular Bureau, if a visa were involved, or the Economic, Science, or Energy Bureaus on other issues might have a strong “vote” in the decision. But most discussions largely focused —were worked— on the geographic desk. This was not just the case with the Soviet desk. Whenever there are issues that need to be decided, reconciled, they always end up on the geographic desk. If they can't be settled at a lower level by the desk, in consultation with other parties, they go up to the level of the Assistant Secretary. From there, they may go up to the Secretary of State or even the White House—the “Seat of Authority” of Power. That's the route involved, to answer your question as to how you get a request approved or disapproved.

If the Secretary of State should approve the request and another agency such as the ABC (Atomic Energy Commission—now Nuclear Regulatory Commission)—didn't like that decision, it can appeal to the President. And that's what it does. Then there is Congress, of course. Let's not forget that members of the House of Representatives and the Senate are involved in such issues all the time, usually because there is a constituent who has expressed himself one way or the other, or because there is a Congressman whose area of competence causes him to get involved.

What you're getting at is the more routine, clearance procedure needed for national security related issues. All of those others were basically “political” issues, in which the State Department is primarily involved in U.S.-U.S.S.R. bilateral relations. However, a decision may involve other areas, such as a military base or a KGB agent who is off “spying” or “ensnaring”. That was also my area of “expertise.” We pretty much knew who was who. We kept a little book listing who was and who wasn't a KGB agent. Of course,

no government agency would say, “So and so is a KGB agent.” The phraseology would always be, “He is believed to be a KGB or GRU (military intelligence) agent.” I would say that a good 50% of the people assigned to the Soviet Embassy in Washington were KGB agents. But the distinction between diplomats who were employed by that agency or other Soviet agencies, as far as security is concerned, is moot.

Remember, they had no “local American” staff—no equivalent of the Foreign Service National staff. They were all Soviet citizens. Many of them at the theoretically “lower” levels, in fact, were intelligence operatives. Other officials in the Embassy often took their directions from them. KGB officials often had the “cover” of “First Secretary for so and so.” The senior officer of the KGB was known as the “Rezidyent,” and most in the Soviet Embassy knew who he was. I think that he “passed” semi-officially as “Rezidyent.” Beyond that, other agents were sort of “buried” in the Consular Section or other parts of the Embassy. The Soviet Ambassador's chauffeur was probably at least a colonel in the KGB. Then other Soviet citizens holding various jobs, such as journalists were also considered to be, if not under the control of the KGB, certainly under its influence. At the Embassy, too, those not employed directly by the KGB might be real Soviet Foreign Office people. However, they walked a very careful line. The Ambassador was not a KGB officer, but he listened carefully to the Rezidyent.

The other intelligence group was the GRU, the military intelligence organization. They were a large group but they focused on military questions, just as in Moscow we had a large, military attach# office. The people in our Embassy in Moscow were largely from DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency). Some of them were associated with the CIA.

When GRU people traveled or were out “doing something,” they were looked at very carefully by all of the members of the clearance committee. On the committee were representatives of the military, CIA, FBI, I think, maybe, the ABC-all of those agencies involved in national security in one way or another were members of the clearance committee. We didn't meet around a table. It was very rare that we sat down and

discussed some issue. We handled it by telephone. Obviously, we were not discussing classified material on the telephone, but we knew what the issue was. We also used interagency memoranda transmitted by secure, interagency means, much like telegrams from our Embassies abroad. If the FBI, for example, had a reason to object to a certain person leaving Washington, they would send a “No” back to the State Department and often come and visit me to discuss the problem. We would have to go back to them and say that you can't just say “No.” A negative response was only acceptable if one of the agencies had a very strong defendable objection to the individual's travel. Usually, there weren't many objections. For instance, you didn't have the FBI and the CIA squabbling over whether one Soviet official went on a particular trip or didn't go. Usually, if there was a serous doubt, they didn't go.

Often, reciprocity was the principal consideration. I don't say that we did it to be mean. We would declare someone persona non grata, taking the next person in the list I kept of folks deserving to be expelled. Action of this kind wasn't taken out of meanness. It was because the persons involved had the biggest or the most “black marks” against them and/ or because it was time to exercise reciprocity for what was being done in Moscow.

Q: You mentioned the “black box.” First of all, what did that mean and how did you rank the bad guys?

MORGAN: I had 5” x 7” file cards and a black file box big enough to hold them. It was three or four inches thick. I kept cards which I made out myself, every time a new Soviet diplomat arrived, with his (there were few “hers” in those days) name and probably date of birth, as well as his title. The CIA keeps regular biographies on these people. I probably prepared a summary of their biographies on the front of the card. Basically, these were UNCLASSIFIED cards. That is, there was UNCLASSIFIED information on them, but it was not to be distributed. I didn't put extraordinarily sensitive information on the cards, but I indicated on the card whether they were believed to be GRU or KGB. I indicated what their assignment might be.

Routinely, FBI information flowed to us on these people, as they were observed in their functions, or were visited, perhaps, by somebody. As you know, it's rather common knowledge that the FBI kept a keen eye and ear on what happened within the Soviet Embassy and when Embassy personnel traveled. FBI reports on these people went across my desk. I would read them. They tended to be terribly involved, extraordinarily bureaucratic, and written in a kind of “double talk.” Never could they say that the information came from eavesdropping, because they would never admit it. They would say that the information came from “a known, reliable source,” a “thought to be reliable source,” a “suspected to be reliable source,” or a “sometimes reliable source.” They used these “jargon” words to describe a mechanical device or, in some cases, a real person “who is known to be.” The report contained those “caveats,” and I would then make a note —if the man had been “caught” servicing a suspected mail box or “lamp post”. In other words, activity which involved really serious indications that the man was “performing duties not in accordance with his diplomatic status.” That, of course, was the basis for declaring him persona non grata. This, of course, is what the Soviets did frequently, but it was a matter of degree or seriousness behind their motive.

I would put little sentences on the card which would accumulate over the year or years that the Soviet diplomat had behaved in “improper” fashion. Then I shuffled the cards in “rank” order of black marks. Number one card probably was PNGed next.

Q: Was it really at your discretion to pull out a card, give it to your superiors, and say to him, “This is the next person in line to be 'PNGed'?”

MORGAN: Yes, but the only word I would argue with is “discretion.” It was a mechanical thing. I kept records of this kind on these people in the box, basically in chronological order. As new people arrived, I would put them at the back of the box, to work their way forward. What we tried to do was what the Soviets tried to do. That was to “PNG” the right person. Obviously, there would be people whom we would “PNG” in their own right. If a person really got caught “red handed,” the FBI wanted to kick him out of the country.

Sometimes they'd go “public” which forced our hands. We objected, but the CIA really raised the roof: “Now they'll get one of ours”. The question would get into the newspapers, and the American public would demand, “Get this man out of our country.”

However, often—and I don't have any specific recollection of a real case—if the Soviets “PNGed” one of our people, later on they would say that it was their right to do this, and they of course were correct. Hopefully, it would be somebody who was nearing the end of his tour in Moscow. To expel somebody early in his tour meant that you were “throwing him out” forever, because once a person is “PNGed,” he will seldom be able to go back to that country. In a very few cases we were able to arrange for people who had been “PNGed” to go back to Moscow, but there were very few of these. So by “PNGing” somebody, you were ending that person's career in Soviet affairs, as well as blow years of preparation and expertise.

So PNGing was a very serious step. It applied to the Soviet Bloc countries, too. The Soviets also did not want their person to have to leave the United States after he had only been here for, say, a week or a month. He would have gone through an enormously extended period of training. Read the book, “The Charm School,” by Nelson De Mille, for example, to get some idea of the years of training involved for some of them. Our people are trained for a shorter period, but it still involves a long period of time and lots of resources.

So the decision to “PNG” somebody was a chronological decision. You tried to find someone who had been in, say, Washington about the same length of time as the person expelled from our Embassy in Moscow. However, the thickness of the card, the length of the entries, “earning” his place at the top of the list (or front of the box) because of the behavior he had been involved in would also play a role in the selection of the person for expulsion. Maybe there had been clear, previous expressions of our dismay at the behavior of the person. That sort of thing would cause such a person to come to the front of the box. I would maintain the box mechanically, but often driven by the lengthy

of service in Washington.. I would be asked, “Who's next?” And I would say, “Abramov,” or whoever. I would prepare a memorandum giving the reasons for the choice—maybe attaching the full FBI reports which I had received and filed away. The final decision would always be decided at a very high level. Maybe it would require approval by the Secretary of State for someone to be “PNGed,” because of the possible ramifications

Q: Could we talk about some of the other things that you did. Did you monitor the movement of ships?

MORGAN: Yes. For lack of a more specific term, I had a sort of “military” responsibility: the military, in general, although certainly our political-military people and our military people had a big piece of that. However, on bilateral political issues, I was pretty much responsible for military matters. Very few of these involved the Soviet Army or Air Force. Once in a while an incident would occur in which a U. S. plane had been shot down by mistake, deliberately, or whatever. But that was rare. The same was true of the Soviet Army. All of the exercises held were so routine that nobody ever crossed the line into the Federal Republic of Germany.

I think that the biggest thing I got involved in concerned John Hemenway, a former U.S. military officer and later an FSO, diplomat in Moscow. He was on the German desk when I was in SOV. He came storming into my office one day and said, “Bill, we must get ready to go to war!” He was livid. I asked, “What happened?” He said, “Well, the Soviet Army in Berlin is making us lower the tail gates of our trucks.” We had refused to lower our tail gates, and this became a very serious issue between the Soviet Army and the U. S. Army. Things like that were rare. That was more a question of John Hemenway getting excited than it was an issue between the Soviet and American Armies, because in Berlin all sides kept things fairly under control and orderly. They weren't “poking” each other. Incidentally, John calmed down, eventually, and we didn't go to war, and I can't remember what we did with our tail gates!

That left the Navy—and the Treasury, because, I might remind you—the Department of the Treasury was then responsible for the Coast Guard. (I believe the Coast Guard came under the Department of Transportation in 1967.) The Coast Guard was where most of the "action" was for me. But, first of all, the Navy. Both the Soviet and the American Navy—I would like to say, absolutely equally—like to play "chicken." I think it must be something written in the manuals of both navies. My son is in the Navy. I must ask him to say what the manual says about encounters with Soviet Navy ships. Clearly, it was part of the "game"—to break the boredom, that's what you do on the high seas in the North, when the icebergs are coming at you. You play "chicken." to test each other—each other's prowess and professional abilities. I exaggerate somewhat, but not a lot. When we got into these cases afterwards, we found out that that's what was happening. They had become too damned "clever" and "cute." And, of course, I would have to blame the other side for being equally "cute," or I think I used the work "provocative" in the diplomatic note I drafted. I knew the Soviets would understand that word. I got into such incidents, encounters; they ended up on my desk.

Q: Can you remember one, specific incident? What does that mean and how did it reach your desk?

MORGAN: Let's say that it happened near Murmansk, out on the high seas, where there are more Soviet than American ships. We have an American submarine, and there is a Soviet submarine operating nearby. Or an American cruiser or destroyer. A Soviet flotilla is coming out from Soviet territorial waters and into the high seas, off Norway. The first thing you know an American cruiser is passing a Soviet cruiser, six yards apart. Or they scrape each other or back into each other. They are "playing games" on the high seas and at some speed. This was happening—and still happens. It's a way—I should not go on any further in characterizing this behavior. But it was trouble, because you had to back your way through "non-apologies," through "who saw it first," through "intensive examinations,"

through things that took an awful lot of time for just one, simple thing. From one Navy to another Navy. And no lessons learned whatsoever, nor victories claimed.

The big thing with the Navy, with the Coast Guard, in part, and with the Canadian Government, because it sometimes happened in Canadian territorial waters, transit through the “Northwest Passage,” for example, in the area of pack ice, and sometimes under the ice. The Navy made an annual or maybe semi-annual trip through the Northwest Passage. Some of the trip was by submarine under the ice. A lot of it was by cruisers through the pack ice, preceded by icebreakers. It was our Navy's way of asserting our “rights.” We did not accept Canadian claim of national waters or said all navies have the right of transit from one national territory to another. This basically is international naval law and what keeps lawyers in business. The high seas are anyone's territory. There was a big question regarding the Dardanelles Strait, which flows into the Mediterranean Sea, and other, similar issues, involving international waters. Who proves that they are international waters? The fleets of the various nations. That's where we got into trouble. Sometimes it involved the Canadians. They said that the Northwest Passage is in their territory, and we have to ask their permission to pass through it. The Soviets would go through, our Navy would go through, and we would find ourselves involved in encounters and disputes—sometimes caused by “provocative acts” on our part or on their part. In some cases these were accidental. Some of these incidents were tragic, in which some people lost their lives.

But naval tradition was also the basis for one of the nicer aspects of bilateral Soviet-American relations. Let me now switch 180 degrees. When one sailor is in trouble, another sailor helps. It doesn't matter what country it is. If there is an accident on the high seas, a ship of another Navy will come to the rescue. I've seen some cases of the Soviet Navy helping the American Navy.

As an outgrowth of the Navy and other U.S. agencies, I remember case of exceptional cooperation. When I was in SOV I got very much involved in a program which the Soviets

wanted. It first came up when I was on a trip to Siberia and visited the Far North The topic is “permafrost.”—permanently frozen earth just inches under the surface. The Soviets had an excellent Permafrost Institute in Yakutsk up near the Arctic Circle. I spent a day there with the director and staff. We had some undertakings with Canada, especially since we adjoined territorially in the frozen north. With the Soviets, who joined in with Canada and the U.S. some wonderful things developed—testing permafrost conditions and exchanging information. That was one of the more positive things that happened with the U,S.S.R. back in the days of the Cold War.

Contact with the Coast Guard was really the area where most of my time with maritime affairs was spent. This involved Soviet ships coming, either by request or by accident, into American ports. There were far fewer American ships going into Soviet ports, in part because the USSR doesn't have the number or types of ports that we do. Soviet ports are located in a very limited area along the Pacific Ocean and the Baltic and Black Seas. We had some problems with the Black Sea when American ships tried to get to Soviet ports. Actually, some of the Soviet ships had accidents or problems off our coasts and they needed to be rescued or assisted. But all of that needed our permission—literally, my agreement.

We had one official from the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury who was responsible for Coast Guard affairs. We had some stressful moments. I guess that I “excited” him, particularly when I had to raise a problem with him in the middle of the night, such as Treasury's ok for a Soviet ship to come into New York. Usually, under such extreme conditions, such a request involved an accident to the ship's engines or something like that. In other cases it was deliberate—they were merely testing us. Finally, in some cases, it was simply a “formal” request.

We in State were always looking for ways to try to improve Soviet-American relationships. Sometimes, there were little things like these maritime issues which were symbolic and which both sides, down into the two system, wanted. That is, the U. S. Coast Guard and

the Soviet Maritime fleets and counterparts. There were a lot of forces out there that weren't trying to find ways to show us as enemies but, rather, how we might relieve some of the tensions that existed between the two superpowers..

This often involved working within the Soviet system of bureaucratic controls. We knew that if we could “eat away” at rigid, “knee jerk” reactions to Cold War antagonisms it would eventually produce a more relaxed relationship, d#tente, if I may use the exact term.. It would be better to keep working at this tactic: the visitor exchanges program, for example.. By the way, the Soviets had—how shall we say it—ideological reasons to support such exchange agreements. They were ideological in the sense of showing the Soviet Union as a country rich in cultural affairs such as music, opera, ballet, literature...and highly competitive in scientific research and accomplishments. It was rewarding to see some of our military colleagues—certainly maritime—recognize that it was in our national interest to strive to reduce tensions and sources of disagreement.

Q: Can you think of any other, specific issues that you covered which were of particular interest?

MORGAN: No.

Q: All right. Then, after two years on the Soviet desk, 1964-1966, you moved to the Office of Personnel in the Department of State as a Career Counselor. Would you tell us how you got this assignment and why you, in particular, were given that assignment?

MORGAN: Yes, it has a very Soviet-related answer. As my tour in SOV was nearing an end—and remember that at that time we didn't “bid” for assignments—we “shopped” for them or people “shopped” for us. They looked us up in various lists of jobs in the Foreign Service around the world. Or many of us simply waited for the system to tell us where we were going. There was a certain sense of “discipline,” if I may use that word. It was more common and acceptable than it is today.

I went to a Career Counselor or someone else in Personnel and asked, “What's next?” I was told, “Well, the next logical thing is to talk to Jake Beam.” He had been Ambassador to the Soviet Union and, I think, was subsequently Ambassador elsewhere. Anyhow, he was a Sovietologist who was a very senior person in the Foreign Service. He was assigned to Geneva, in charge of a series of delegations there which primarily were involved in Soviet-U. S. discussions on disarmament and other, major policy issues. I think it was U.N. connected. I was supposed to go and replace a senior person on his staff, who is actually bilingual in English and Russian. He was of Russian origin and had done nothing in his life but work on the Soviet Union. He had served in the Foreign Service in the Soviet Union and wanted to spend his professional life in Soviet affairs. At least, this was the way I was told this. I can't remember his name, perhaps Peter Tarnoff

Well, I was interviewed by Ambassador Jake Beam, who was in Washington at the time. I was very impressed with the man. He was very kind and generous and seemed very pleased with the meeting. He called me up afterwards and said that he would be very honored if I would join his staff. However, he said, if I didn't want to do this for any reason, I should feel free not to take up this offer. The more I thought about it, the more I thought that I would be replacing a very highly qualified person who had worked on disarmament issues. Many of these issues are extremely sophisticated and with which I had had no working knowledge to do with. I had been involved in bilateral, not multilateral affairs on the Soviet desk and internal affairs in the Embassy in Moscow.

Q: What is the difference between “bilateral” and “multilateral” affairs?

MORGAN: I should have made that clear before. On the Soviet desk there were three sections: multilateral, bilateral, and economic. In “multilateral” affairs you would get into “other country” or multinational issues and such as disarmament and NATO relationships. “Bilateral” affairs refer to U. S. - Soviet bilateral relationships, involving more “nitty gritty” ship confrontations, PNGing Soviet diplomats, and that sort of thing.

So I thought quite a bit about this choice I had. It was a great honor to be offered a position on Ambassador Beam's staff, and my ego was properly inflated. However, the job would involve an assignment to Geneva much of the time and would require a great deal of travel back and forth between Geneva and Washington. In my view my knowledge of Russian would have to be at the 5 - 5 (bilingual, or “perfect”) level. It isn't, it wasn't, it never would be—certainly not on the level of the native-born Russian speaker that I would be replacing. Secondly, dealing with issues like disarmament which were so complex and with which I had had minimal touch would be very difficult. My wife and I talked it over. I discussed the assignment with colleagues of mine.

Finally, I decided to go and see my Career Counselor in Personnel. My Career Counselor was Morris Draper, an Arabist himself who later worked with Ambassador Phil Habib on various aspects of Lebanese affairs. We chatted about it. He said, “Bill, I hear exactly what you're saying. I think that you've been in Soviet affairs for a long time now. You've been in Russian language training and Soviet affairs, in Moscow and Washington for six years. I think that it's time for you to expand your horizons a little. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is talking about getting people 'out of their area of specialization' and mixing them up a little. I think it's time for you to do something else.”

I said, “Morrie, what do you think I should do?” He said, “Come and join me in Personnel.” I said, “You're crazy. I don't know anything about Personnel.” He said, “Neither do I—none of us does here. We have lots of 'technicians' who do the 'nitty gritty.' You would be the one who does the counseling. You would be the one who advises Foreign Service Officers on where to go. You would work with the Geographic bureaus on who gets what person for what job.” I said that that was an interesting thought.

I was introduced to his boss, Bob HoughtoWe ended up in agreement on my next assignment: Central Personnel. Bob Houghton ended up being my boss in my next assignment: Embassy Beirut. I spent two, wonderful years in Personnel and worked with people at my own grade, age, and experience level in mid career. They became good

friends and remained so throughout the years. To me—and I have said this to any Foreign Service Officer who would listen to me—it was a vitally necessary assignment in any institution. You've got to know how the system works, and you learn this in Personnel. Subsequently, during service on the Board of Examiners for the Foreign Service and as a Foreign Service Inspector and my last tour: Director of the Office of Employee Relations, I saw that this assignment to Personnel had been my first, real exposure to the realities, the fairness, the openness, and the integrity of the system. Of course I also saw some “negatives” or ways to help the System help itself.

Then the System had fewer strictures on it. I would say that some of the strictures that have been imposed in recent years have had a negative impact. However, that's just my opinion, though I know that I share it with others. During the time that I was in Personnel I won't say that the Service seemed to be composed of “gentlemen,” because that would obviously sound “sexist.” However, it was composed of a group of people doing what they thought was best for the interests of the Department of State, the nation, and best for the individual in terms of assignments.

That's what I ended up doing. During my first year in Personnel I worked with mid-career, Political Officers, working out ways for them to get the best “growth” assignments and training. In time I added mid-career, Consular Officers to my “bag.” That was at a time when we had a large number of Foreign Service Staff Officers who had never been required to serve in the U.S., as an FSO is. These Staff Officers had been integrated into the FSO Corps under the Wriston Program some years before and now their time to serve at home had arrived. I had about 80 technician-type former Staff Officers whom I had to bring back from overseas on their next assignment and find a job for them in the Department of State.

I was also there at the time when the “Cone” system was installed. Many people in the Foreign Service today think that the “Cone” system goes back almost to the foundation of the United States. Actually, this system was developed when I was in Personnel in the

mid-1960's (1966-1968). It represented an attempt by Personnel “experts”—not Foreign Service Officers—to try to adjust the system and make it more capable of coming up with a “proper” balance between jobs and what was needed in these jobs and people. It also evaluated FSOs' strengths and weaknesses and how to train them to the future needs of the Service. One of the ways of doing that was to try to identify their professional skills and assign them to certain specialties: Political, Economic, Administrative, and Consular. To this day the “Cone” system has not worked effectively. However, it was an attempt to do this. It really doesn't matter, as long as you have some sort of system, and keep changing it as has been the case. Oh, and don't tell the “troops” too much about it; they might catch on and learn how “to beat it”.

To achieve this balance between job needs and people skills, we—as career counselors and custodians of the Central System—fought with the Geographic bureaus—who had to fill jobs— to make sure that officers got “good” positions. We tried to make certain that the assignments had growth potential in them. We sought to get them out of some specialties that they had been assigned to over the years and to make them “generalists,” We also had a “new” buzz work: management. We worked to give them a kind of “raw” management skills. You don't get management skills by simply going into consular or administrative assignments where obviously such skills were essential. You learned these by working effectively with people, the intricacies and demands of managing people effectively. At the same time leaders had to manage programs and the resources necessary to run them. Let's add foreigners into this pot, officials and employees and all of this in foreign settings. If you don't have the right officer in the right spot, fully equipped and trained to perform effectively,, the assignment is not done well—and the boss gets mad!

Q: What was your interaction with other Foreign Service Officers as Career Counselor for the Consular Cone?

MORGAN: We all had our own little areas of responsibility. Mine ended up FSO-3 and FSO-4 officers—mid-career— in both Political and Consular “Cones” At the time, based on their experiences, they had just became “Coned.” Lorry Lawrence took over the Consular officers nearer to the end of my tour. Whenever a given person was on home leave, he or she was required to have an interview with a Career Counselor. We would read their entire personnel file before the appointment, which means I would have read all of the efficiency reports that had been written on them. Obviously, the more recent ones were the more important ones. I would do a summary of what they had done, where they had gone, and what their job future looked like. I would project 10 years of future assignments for them. I would hand this report to them, after having sat with them and summarized my impression of how they had done. Before the session they also had the opportunity to reread their file.

Remember, the only way that an officer really knows how he is doing—no matter what his boss says or anything else—is a promotion. If he made the promotion list, he knows that he has “done it.” If he doesn't make the list, he thinks that he's a failure. Now, that's unfair. It's wrong. However, as a “dispassionate, highly professional” Career Counselor, I could give them what I hope they would take as a fair, clear analysis—not from anybody who was their boss or had a operational line of concern in him, but rather a dispassionate evaluation. That's what the interview consisted of. As a result, we more or less negotiated over their next 10 years of assignments. I would tell a given officer that, from what I hear, it's time for you to do a little bit of this, or get out of this area and into that. They could speak up, for or against my views. Then they got a final product. We had negotiated a projection of their next 10 years.

It didn't mean that they were going to get those assignments, as the system works. However, that's what we would aim at. They would know openly that this is what the System was looking at and that they could expect support from Central Personnel if they would go along with it as much as feasible. So, in that sense, it was communications

between a colleague and the individual officer. They were getting an appraisal from the System as to how they were doing and where they were going.

Q: How did the FSO's respond to you as a Career Counselor?

MORGAN: Well, of course, I have a biased view. I have my own impression of them. They weren't about to say, “I hate you!” I compared notes with other Career Counselors. Others would say, “You just 'bombed out' on Charley X. You'd better call him back in. He went out, screaming and yelling.” Well, that didn't happen very often. I think that I can say, dispassionately, that I had positive feedback on the vast majority of the officers I interviewed.

The geographic and functional bureaus, of course, had direct supervision of these people, because they were assigned to a specific bureaus. First of all, as I was in Moscow, working for the European Bureau, the Bureau knew best my performance. The Bureau knew about the career counseling interview, especially if the officer concerned went charging in to his colleagues and complained, or whatever. I think that, weighing all of those things, the procedures at that time worked pretty well as a part of the assignments process. As I recall, we developed figures during my first assignment to Personnel which indicated that 75% of the assignments we recommended were agreed all the way through the system and, hopefully, professionally developed the officers concerned. I think that another answer to that question is, “We all like to know that the system, the organization, as opposed to your boss, your colleague, or whoever, has a view of you, appreciates what you have done, and gives you an opportunity to talk back.” These conversations, obviously, had considerable impact on the officer. They really “let their hair down.” They said, “You know what I just went through at this post? You know what that boss was like? That Ambassador is a mess.”

This is where these very privileged, private memoranda of our individual counseling sessions were particularly useful. These memoranda went to no one else. It was a very

privileged file. No one had access to it but the individual officer and the very small group of Career Counselors. This file was not shared with any of the geographic bureaus. I think that that was one of the most important aspects of them. The officer could speak most frankly and talk about things—give an opinion on a post, give an opinion on other people and the ways the system sort of brings us together. Some people might call it “corridor talk.” Well, it doesn't take place in the corridors of the Department of State. It takes place in these privileged files, in a sense.

When a person is coming up for an assignment, you can refer to his file and, based on your knowledge of the person, say, “No, I don't think that that's the place for that officer to go.” I recommended very strongly against one person going to Africa. He ended up going there anyway—despite my input. During this African assignment he ended up murdering the communicator at the post to which he was assigned. My advice was that he had spent too long a time in Africa. I thought that he was “around the bend” or “over the cliff.” And he was psychologically troubled, in fact. I'm not trying to say, “I told you so,” but we had some ability to “defend” the overall professional interests of the officer. We really were “systems people” for the individuals that we were talking about.

That involved talking about all of their strengths and weaknesses. We at times had to say, “Charley, this is something in your performance which is clear as a bell.” The career counselors had a file on these officers, going back 10 or 15 years, so you knew that this was not a one-time report. Everything in the report said, for example, “You would improve if you drafted better! (That really means you don't know how to write!) I think that there's a problem there.” I wish that it were that simple, explicit, though it sometimes was. However, there was enough there that you could share the system's views of performance with the officer.

Q: After your two years as a Career Counselor in the Office of Personnel, 1966-1968, you were assigned to the U. S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, as the chief of the Consular

Section. Was it an interesting time to be assigned there? Tell us how you got that assignment and how you felt about it at the time.

MORGAN: That's one of the stories that I do remember. Many of these other memories have “faded,” haven't they? They always say in the Foreign Service, as they do in most institutions, that if you're in Personnel, you can “name” any assignment you want. You can have your “pick” of the system. Well, that's kind of true, but not quite. You still have to be approved by the Bureau involved and you have to be qualified. However, it is true that you do have a little “edge” on where you want to go.

I had the possibility of one of two assignments. The first one would have been as Political Counselor in Belgrade Yugoslavia. The second one would have been as Political Counselor in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Neither of those assignments materialized. I convinced the Yugoslav desk officer that Russian was not the same as Serbo-Croatian, that I couldn't make the transition without taking another language, and that I wasn't about to take on another Slavic language. A dear friend of mine had served in Belgrade. He said that it was kind of “the pits,” not very interesting, and a dirty, dirty place. Haiti sounded a little better. I remembered a couple of friends who had served there. Then, of course, there were a lot of complications. Haiti was the country of “Papa Doc” Duvalier. Well, I was formally assigned to Port-au-Prince. I was “paneled,” as they say in the Department.

Loren Lawrence, who had recently come to the Department from Tel Aviv Israel, was my Career Counselor colleague in charge of consular affairs. We became very, very good friends. I went in to see him one day and said, “I've got this fellow who is terrific. He's been in Moscow, and I know him very well. He did a superb job in Moscow, doing consular work. There is this job in Beirut as chief of the Consular Section. He would be perfect for the job. He is up for assignment.” Loren said, “Bill, we've been trying to 'sell' this guy. No one will take him. I know you are well intentioned, but that job is too good for him. It is fascinating. I've just come from Tel Aviv and know what Beirut is like. It's simply a beautiful country.

You'll love it. Your family will love it. It's just great for you. It is a responsible job. You'll have a really interesting job there."

I said, "What do you mean, that I'm going to have an interesting job there? I'm going to Port-au-Prince." He said, "No, no, Bill, Port-au-Prince is not for you. You're going to Beirut." I said, "Come on, Loren, this is insane." I told my wife about this conversation, and she said, "I refuse to listen to you any more. You tell me where you're going. I refuse to discuss any more future assignments with you."

So I was assigned to Beirut, and it was just the job which involved my strengths and didn't focus on my weaknesses. It was a hell of a lot of fun for five years. So I was assigned there "through the back door," if you will. I had really excellent career counseling by a fellow Career Counselor.

Q: Your tour in Beirut from 1958 to 1973 is covered in the first interview with you, which took place on June 27, 1988. You were interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy. That interview also covers all of your service after Beirut, with the exception of 1973-1974, when you served on the Board of Examiners of the Foreign Service, 1974-1975, when you were at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, and 1985-1987—your last assignment in the Foreign Service— when you were Director of Employee Relations at the Department of State. We'll cover those three now.

You were transferred from your position as Chief of the Consular Section in the American Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, to Director of the Consular Panel of the Board of Examiners for the Foreign Service in the Department of State. Tell us how you got that assignment while you were in Beirut and how you felt about leaving an overseas assignment and coming back to Washington.

MORGAN: I received a telephone call from a friend in the Bureau of Consular Affairs, who was a staff assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the bureau. He was "bracing" me for this "terrible" news, which I was obviously going to reject, that I was going to be assigned

to the Board of Examiners for the Foreign Service. I say “bracing,” because the Board of Examiners has not had a terribly good reputation over the years. That's the place where the Department sort of “dumps” people when they have reached the end of their careers. It's always been filled with a lot of bureaucrats. That was its reputation, although, as you know, reputations are not always fully deserved. Certainly, the Board of Examiners, at that period, was doing everything in its power to become a very active, very significant, vital process—indeed, the only way in which you could enter the Foreign Service, unless you came in under very special programs which they have. So my informant was certainly waiting for me to “blow up.” Instead, I said, “Well, no, that sounds interesting. What does it mean?” He said, “It means a lot of travel. It means that you're going to have to leave for Africa right away and give the Foreign Service oral exam to candidates all over Africa. And you're going to have to travel all over the United States.” I said, “It sounds great! I'll take it!”

Q: Can we back up a little? Can you give us a job description of this assignment—what the Chairman of the Consular Panel is?

MORGAN: The Board of Examiners as, I suppose, most of your readers know, is the body which administers the oral examination to all candidates who wish to come into the Foreign Service as Foreign Service Officers. It also is responsible for screening and recruiting clerical staff employees, such as secretaries, for Security Officers, and for other specialists. However, the biggest “chunk” of the job I was in—not in terms of numbers of people but in terms of effort—was the administration of] the FSO oral exams. With the exception of certain, special programs, which we can talk about later, all candidates had to take a written exam. When I came into the Foreign Service, it was a three-day exam. When I was on the Board of Examiners, it was a one-day exam. As I recall it, roughly 200,000 people took the written exam, and 20,000 passed it and 200 pass the oral. (As a marvelous euphemism we said, “recommended for further consideration.”.

Q: Is the written exam given on the same day as the oral exam?

MORGAN: No. The written exam is given once a year—it used to be on the first Saturday of December. This year [1995] it won't be given at all, because we have too many people in the Foreign Service, so “Management” says. But that's a different subject. I think that the number of people who take the exam is still roughly 200,000, with 20,000 passing. This pass mark is based on a “curve.” In other words, you “draw the line” after the top-scoring 20,000 candidates have been reached. That “line” then becomes 70 percent, the passing score.. Those that “pass” are sent a letter and invited to take the oral exam. Of those who are invited, not all come. Some took the Foreign Service exam as a “lark,” some have meanwhile received better job offers, or whatever. I don't know the exact figure, but roughly 50 percent plus of the 20,000 actually sign up for the oral exam.

The oral exam is given by the Board of Examiners. During my time there, the Board was divided into four “cones,” which I described previously. The “cone” system tried to look at people specialized in one or more areas during the major part of their careers (Consular, Administrative, Political, or Economic). When I was Chairman of the Consular Panel in the Board of Examiners, there were three other “chairpersons,” one for each of the other three “cones.” With us was a representative of USIA since that agency, under the Foreign Service Act, recruited and examined and successful candidates were appointed as FSIOs, “I” being Information. We were basically responsible for the “tone” and the general way in which the exam was given, in terms of our respective specialization. Now, what do I mean by that?

All Foreign Service candidates are orally evaluated “across the board.” Everyone is queried about their suitability in general competence as well as potential Political, Economic, Administrative, and Consular affairs. My job was to make sure that the “consular” type of questioning was good and “honed in” on the qualities which various, scientific studies and our own experience had shown to make the “best” consular officers. They had to be Foreign Service Officers, first and foremost. They also had to have, shall we say, certain tendencies to “succeed” in the specialization for which they were

applying for admission. At the time of the written or the oral exam—I can't remember which—they were required to say what “cone” they wanted to compete in. This is ludicrous, obviously. A person doesn't know, usually. He or she usually doesn't have but the faintest idea what those “cones” are. However, they were required to “lock themselves in” to one “cone” or another. Clearly, this system hasn't remained—and couldn't remain—that rigid. However, at the time of the oral exam, it was my job to see that we were getting the best opportunity to select those who had chosen the consular “cone” to be competitive and to be productive, consular officers. By sitting in on the exams, I was present, or we had other consular examiners on the Consular Panel there. One of the three of us assigned to BEX sat in on the oral examination of every person who had chosen the consular “cone.”

We also sat in on other “cone” exams. Maybe I would “steer” consular questions on those exams. We all worked together as a very well-tuned group of 12 or so examiners, including our USIA colleague, In addition, during the peak season, we also had part-time people. They were not volunteers but were assigned to these duties on a part-time basis. They were good people who were available for these duties, perhaps between assignments. They would join us, especially as we traveled about the U.S., because when the full “season” came around, we gave the oral exam in a number of places—about 10 or 15 cities around the country.

When people were told that they had passed the written exam, they were asked when and where they would like to take the oral exam. They would put in dates, and we would get to the dates they requested as nearly as possible.

Q: Tell us about the kind of qualities you looked for, as a representative of the consular “cone.”

MORGAN: I examined them against the overall qualification of a “well rounded” and well equipped human being. I say “human,” because consular work demands a little extra human quality, I think—an understanding of other people, including suffering people.

Some of the qualities included an ability to make a decision. Consular Officers have to make decisions—sometimes unpleasant ones. A visa “line officer” has, perhaps, 30 seconds to make a decision on whether a person is qualified to come to the United States as a tourist, a student, a Ph. D. in physics, or whatever. This is really “impossible” to do, but Consular Officers have to do this, under pressure, often in extremely hard, physical conditions. Visa lines in Jamaica, for example, are insufferable. A visa line in Moscow is an extraordinarily difficult place to work, for a different reason. So, first of all, we examiners searched for signs of the candidate”s ability to demonstrate confidence in their own judgment and to make good judgments as quickly as possible.

Secondly, I looked for a sense of humor. If you can't face all that with a sense of humor, seek another career.

Thirdly, there is the question as to how a candidate makes decisions without adequate information. How do you “save” yourself? Do you go and “hide”? I'll give you one example, my favorite, if you will. We would formulate this question in one way or another. “Suppose that you are a vice-consul in Cairo. You know nothing about consular work. This is your first day on the job, and the phone rings. You're sitting at your desk. A tourist guide calls you from the Pyramids and informs you that an American woman in his group has just died. What are you going to do?” How did the candidate react to that question? Did he or she “blanch”? “Giggle”? “Go and hide”? “Just hang up the phone”? “Run to the Ambassador for assistance”? “Reach for the Foreign Service Manual”? What did he or she do? There's no “right or wrong” answer to these questions. However, there are some things which are a better indicator as to the candidate's ability to make decisions. The response might be, “Well, I went and got the 'Foreign Service Manual' and read it for the next three hours.” If so, I might think that the person was perhaps better suited to intelligence research than to be a consular officer.

Let's say that the candidate did react by going right to the scene, sensing that on-the—scene was where the action and decision-making was, was needed there—or thought so.

He or she may have gone by the boss on the way out, saying, “Do you have any advice, boss?” Since newly appointed, this reflects the wisdom of picking up some clues on how to proceed. This “new Vice Consul” gets there and goes through it all, examining the corpse, and arranging with the tourist agent to have it brought back to the proper authorities and all that sort of thing, plus a lot of TLC (tender, loving care) for the other tourists in the group. Then, all of a sudden, we, the examiners would say, “How do you know that she's an American?” Wham! We'd just sawed off the candidate's limb. How to recover from that? Smiles, laughter? Or, “Oh, oh, you got me on that one, Charley.” Or does the poor soul panic, or what? All of these little things. Perhaps that's not a good example, but it's the idea of reactions as a human being. If he or she starts lecturing us and trying to change the subject, we recognize a potential “cover up,” trying to “fool us.” After a while we get to be quite good examiners.

This sort of example is applied all across the line. It isn't a straightforward series of questions like, “What do you do if...?” It's really situations that we put these people in—or opinions. We might ask, “Do you feel that the immigration laws should be more strict and that fewer people should come to the United States?” See how they handle this question. Maybe they know nothing about the subject. They don't have to know anything about it. However, if they signed up for the consular “cone,” they ought to know that visas and immigration are part of that area. So you think that they know something. How do they formulate their logic? Does their response cover the complexities of the immigration issue for the United States? Again, they can't be held responsible for any given set of knowledge. You hope that they have something there, and the written exam hopefully brought out some of this. Does that answer your question?

Q: Very well. Do you remember any other questions that you asked? What was your favorite opening salvo?

MORGAN: My favorite opening salvo was always directed at making the candidate feel at ease. Any Personnel Officer knows this. Obviously and by definition, they're not “at

home.” They're as nervous as they come. So what you want to do—to get the best out of the individual and to see what the person is like—is to set a relaxed tone to the interview, the exam—that's what it really is, for both sides. You can't shout at them, “Relax!” That will only make them the more tense. In those days we could know something of the person's background.

Today, the examiners are not allowed to know anything. They know the sex of the applicant, because that is obvious, and they might recognize their race because those characteristics haven't yet been hidden from the examiners.. Otherwise, they know nothing about the person's background. In our day we knew something. We had read something about their university studies and we knew that they had worked in other jobs. We would call upon their strengths from the beginning. We might ask, “Tell us about your tour in Costa Rica in the Peace Corps. What did you learn the most from that? What did you dislike about it?” That sort of thing, because they're talking from their own experience. Then we would start getting into specific areas of the exam.

Q: Demographically speaking, what were you looking for? I suspect that 1973-1974 was not a very good time for young people to go into government service. So, demographically, who were the candidates and what were you looking for?

MORGAN: I would have to reject out of hand your suggestion that we were looking for any particular candidates, from the demographic point of view. We saw young people right out of university and older ones as well. After all, they were people who had signed up for the oral exam, so they weren't going to come at us in an aggressive way. There were a few exceptions. I think that there were a few “weirdos” who got in. They may have felt that this was an opportunity for them to talk back against all of the “evils” in society, and especially the U.S. Government. We'd bid them a pleasant day after they started this approach, but it was rare. We had people right out of university and an awful lot of candidates from the Peace Corps. There were a lot of people from the military who had had, perhaps, a tour in Germany for five years, or whatever. There were a lot of candidates from teaching

positions at the universities. We had a man—a very distinguished gentleman 52 years old. He had run the space program at Cape Kennedy, as it was called then; now it's again called Cape Canaveral. It was mind boggling. He was a man who was a GS-17, or at least a very senior Civil Service employee. He was coming in to be a junior officer in the State Department!

But we did have older people. They always “sicced” me on them, as the Chairman of that candidate's panel, since I had grey hair. I would ask them, “Do you really know what you're doing?” That would be, of course, after they had passed the oral exam. The chairman of that exam always discussed the successes and failures (I should say “strengths and weaknesses!) of each of the candidates. We would tell them why they didn't make it.. It was always stated in terms of “Why you were not found as competitive as other candidates.” Then, on the other hand, we would say in what areas they were found to be competitive. We couldn't say how we had ranked them. You could say, “You did very well. The chances of your being appointed to the Foreign Service are quite good.” But whenever the person was older, we would ask, “Do you realize what it's going to be like, going down from your senior position in the Civil Service to being a junior officer, “managing” the toilets in the Embassy in Ouagadougou, with the Ambassador's wife on your back all the time? Are you prepared for this?” This was a fair question. It wasn't part of the exam. We just wanted to make sure that what they were walking into was not going to be a surprise, because they would have to start at the “bottom.” “No, you're not going to make Foreign Policy right away—if ever.”

I think we did this in the oral exam itself with this man from NASA (National Astronautics and Space Agency). I said, “You know, what brings you to the Department of State?” He said, “You know, you can 'shoot the moon' just so many times. And then you realize that, down here on earth, it's a lot more fun. I've always wanted to travel. I'll always have a place in my heart for NASA. I've learned more and more about what life is like in other countries. I'd like to have a 'go' at it.” I said, “Well, you've only got nine years (or whatever it was) before you're mandatorily retired.” We had to consider for employment anybody, I

think, who had five years left before mandatory retirement. That is, anybody who was 55, because in those days the mandatory retirement age was 60. In other words, there could be no discrimination based on age, with that one caveat. If the person passed the exam, that was all there was to it. This guy from NASA did pass the exam. He was terrific. He got one of the highest scores. He has long since retired, because we examined him 20 years ago!

Back to your opening question. The applicant had to be of a qualifying age, which was 21 to 55, to take the written exam. If he passed the written and the oral and was still under 55, we had to appoint him. We couldn't say, “You're going to have a terrible time as a junior officer” and make this a basis for refusal.

Q: Were you looking for any one kind of person in particular at that time?

MORGAN: Yes, good officers.

Q: Can you be a little bit more specific than that?

MORGAN: No, because that was exactly what we were looking for. We wanted truly competitive, good officers.

Q: Were you absolutely gender, color, and age blind?

MORGAN: No, of course not. I'd argue no human can be, fully. But we had one, overriding rule. We had a psychiatrist available who advised us, trained us, and worked with us all the time. He helped us tremendously. The rule was, “Don't hire in your own image.” What he meant by that was that it is only natural to identify somebody in front of you as a candidate who is in your own image—somebody who thinks, acts, and looks like you, is a male like you, is white like you, and is all of those other things. We were all very conscious of that.

Also, we were very conscious that we did not have a proportionate number of women and, above all, a proportionate number of minorities, especially blacks. We had a few Asians, and the same was true with Hispanics. However, there were very, very few African Americans. They didn't come to us. They either felt that the Foreign Service wasn't “for them,” or their own backgrounds led them to more lucrative opportunities. So, yes, when we had a Black or female candidate, without “tilting” or varying the score, or anything else, we did our best to make sure that the questions we put to them took into consideration the fact that they weren't white, male, Anglo-Saxon, and from an Ivy League school.

You might ask, “How do you do that?” Well, you don't do it under instructions from higher authorities in the State Department. There were no—and I understand that, as of very recently, there still are no—”instructions” on what to do with “ethnic” or female candidates. However, if you're trying to follow the general guidance of the Secretary of State and the United States Government, which encourages “opening up” and “diversity,” and we found somebody from North Dakota, we were cheered to see him or her.

Now, do you “tilt” the examination? No. Do you recognize that maybe that person hasn't been exposed to some of the things involved in foreign affairs which somebody from Massachusetts has been exposed to? The highest scores which I ever gave in my life were to two applicants from South Dakota, who had graduated from a college with an unpronounceable name. But they knew a former Foreign Service Officer who had retired, resigned, or whatever, and was heading the department of foreign affairs in their college. He had turned out classes that were incredible. These people were brilliant, I inferred from the candidates in front of us. They had developed minds, personalities, and so forth. If I remember the panel scores correctly—the oral game was given in Chicago—we gave them 100%. This had never been done before. But they were just “mind boggling.” Were we influenced by the fact that they came from South Dakota? Maybe subconsciously. Maybe we were just very pleased to see two wonderfully turned out people from a place

from which no one had ever entered the Foreign Service, except Secretary of State Warren Christopher. I think that he's from South Dakota.

Q What about the lowest score? Do you remember ever being "shocked" at the performance of one candidate? Did anybody ever "fall apart" during an interview?

MORGAN: Yes. Whenever things like that happened, you did everything that you could to get the person to relax and to bring out themselves. They would "freeze." They just couldn't answer the questions. There was absolutely nothing wrong if candidates said, "I do not know." That's fine. We would go on to another question. This wasn't a "negative." It was just that we would want to get on to something else. Yes, there would be cases where people would "fall apart". I think that the answer to your question is that those who felt that they were so good that they had to pass—those are the ones who "went to the bottom." That is, the arrogant ones—arrogance without substance. I mean, it's something to be Henry Kissinger. There is something about arrogance without competence.

Some of the more "overly self-confident" candidates came from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. They had practically already seen the exam. Some were "briefed" from the beginning. Some of the candidates who went through that school, and a few others schools specializing in foreign affairs, had been briefed on how to take the exam—what to do and what not to do. A perfectly understandable thing to do. But too often these candidates walked in to the exam and thought that they knew the examination procedure backwards and forwards. Well, they didn't, in fact, because they didn't know the "mix" of questions that day. They didn't know the importance to the examiners of "balance" and "control," of being able to handle your ego. And that's just being a "know it all," destined to be declared "not competitive".

Let me add one thing. As chairman of the panel, ultimately—at the end of every single exam or at least at the end of every day, I was responsible for making sure that the proceedings of every exam were written up correctly. "Correctly," in the sense of my

viewpoint, since I had participated in it. I reviewed all of the oral exams and gave the final score, which determined where they would go on the register, the candidates listed by descending score order. I would base that upon the recommendation from the oral panel and what their exam scores were. I would “sum up” each candidate and do a very short accounting of the performance]. In other words, what made them “viable” candidates and why. A summary of their strengths and their weaknesses and if there were any questions because then, if they were called up for appointment, they had to go through medical exams, security clearance, and so on, as well as whether there were any question of, for example, drug abuse. If these clearance procedures raised any questions about possible ineligibility for appointment I would single those out so that, when they did come out to be appointed, the Registrar would know which questions had to be resolved. A person was not appointed to the Foreign Service until he or she went through the whole process, which meant obtaining all required clearances. In sum, that was my ultimate responsibility for those who had signed up for the consular “cone.”

Q: When you made your final evaluation, did you actually come up with a numerical score?

MORGAN: As I remember, the “numerical score” was agreed to by the oral examination panel. I think that I accepted that number. I don't think that I ever changed a number. However, the number could be changed if there were some extraordinary reason for doing so. I mean, the “numerical score” of a person could actually be reduced to 70, if there were some overriding reason, though I can't think of any, off hand. I know that we did have some problems with drug cases.

Q: That was...?

MORGAN: That was when a person was addicted to drugs. I mean, seriously addicted and who had “lied” to us.

Q: Addicted to what?

MORGAN: Oh, heroin or something else that was serious. Not these “passing fancies” such as smoking “pot” for a time. As a matter of fact if they claimed “pure abstinence” in those days, we wondered.

Q: How do you remember finding out?

MORGAN: Through the physical and security exams. Remember, they stayed in contact with me or the Registrar until they were actually appointed. In other words, they were part of the BEX (Board of Examiners) system, until actual appointment. It's only then that they moved on to the Junior Officer Course at the Foreign Service Institute.

Q: So after someone, say, “passes” the oral exam...

MORGAN: With an acceptable, competitive score.

Q: I mean, gets an “80.”

MORGAN: Yes.

Q: Then they are put on a roster.

MORGAN: They are put on a register when they have 70 or above, and that list is known only to the Registrar. Obviously, I could go in to his office and ask about an individual's nearing the top of the list as persons would be taken off the top for appointment. However, that roll or rank-ordering, can “move around.” More importantly, you don't know how far down you're going to go on it. Everyone is “on your back” to find out “when am I going to be appointed?” This is a perfectly natural question. What if the Secretary of State decides that there will be no more appointments this year? Then no one is taken off the register. It is frozen, but newly examined candidates are place on that list, “frozen” or not, in rank-order. What if somebody “falls out,” or quits, just as they're about to be called up to enter

the A-100 course at the Foreign Service Institute? Then the Registrar reaches down and takes the next person on the register, maybe put on but the day before.

Q: So what did some of these people do while they were waiting to be appointed? Did you ever get any "feedback" on that?

MORGAN: Oh, yes. Very much so.

Q: What were they doing?

MORGAN: Some of them were working on their master's degrees. Others had jobs. Those were the ones that you heard from, other than the normally "anxious" ones who wanted to know—and we tried to be as helpful but non-committal as we could. We would say, "We can't tell you. We don't know." Some of the decisions were totally out of our hands, like how many are going to be appointed Foreign Service Officers in a given year. There would be questions usually from those who were facing a "date." They would ask, "Should I start into my next semester?" "Should I renew my commission as a Navy officer?" "Should I divorce my wife?" Or whatever these "dates" are that are out there. They would call Personnel, often just looking for information. They would usually call the Registrar of the Board of Examiners and say, "I can't accept an appointment before such and such a date." They would be told, "Well, you do know that if you don't want us to call you, you'll be taken off the register." So they were "feeling" their way out there, gambling in some cases.

I would like to underscore that this is 1995, the date of our interview. I am talking about 1975—about 20 year old procedures. I would like to think that it's all the same. We know that the process has become much more restricted by various influences which I call "inhibiting forces." But that's because of certain court decisions, and so on. Let me also mention something which was going on then, in 1975, and which I didn't discuss but just alluded to. There were a number of other programs going on.

One of them was a program for the appointment of Foreign Service wives who had been forced to retire as FSOs when they married an FSO. I was in charge of that panel. That included Phyllis Oakley, now a very successful reappointed FSO. I think that we processed 38 reappointments applicants at the time. What they had to do was simply to show that they had been active in those years when they were spouses of Foreign Service Officers, which wasn't hard. Basically, they had to write us a letter of application. They included how they had “added to their credentials” in the intervening years since forced resignation. Then we would assign them a Foreign Service grade. Let's say that they had left the Foreign Service as an FSO-6 or an FSO-8. We would then have to consider what they would have been if they had remained in the Foreign Service. They might be FSO-4's by now or even an FSO-2. Could we reappoint them to that level? Probably not, because we would have had to show that they indeed were doing all of the work that would have gotten them to that level. On the other hand, the chances were good of our giving them a higher grade than they had had when they left the Foreign Service. I think that we had some explicit guidance, that they should be reappointed to a level at least one grade higher. If they had been married, say, to a Foreign Service Officer for 10 years, perhaps they would be reappointed to a level two grades higher. An injustice had been righted, well, sort of.

I also was chairman of our Equal Opportunity program geared to appointment to the FSO corps if you were a qualified minority. The Equal Opportunity Office in the Department of State referred cases to us. These applicants were screened by them and us for academic credentials and other considerations. If they were found eligible by the Equal Opportunity Office in the Department and BEX, we gave them an oral exam—the same oral exam that we gave to all other candidates. However, there is where we did “filter in” their differences of background. I will never, ever, forget the case of an absolutely charming young woman. I think that she was in graduate school, an African American from Howard University—or maybe she was from Georgetown.

She was so charming and energetic and so wanted to pass the exam, which lasted for two or three hours. In this event she couldn't find her competitive. We all just sat there, absolutely silent. I was the chairman of the panel, and it included a Black FSO examiner. Finally, I said, “We've got to decide. Let's do it on paper.” Sometimes, we handled cases like this orally, or by nodding our heads, because it was so obvious that it was a “failure” or a “pass.” Then we negotiated the numbers on various parts of the exam. You wrote those numbers on separate pieces of paper. The three examiners would write down their evaluation: 70, 72, or 73. Then we would average them. If one evaluation was 90 and another was 70, then we had a discussion of a difference that great. Failure was 69. You didn't have to go any lower. I think that, in this case, the three of us sat there. We wanted to cry. We said, “She tried so hard, but she just doesn't have it. She is not competitive. She hasn't demonstrated the skills today that, even with special training and good leadership, she will within five years be competitive with the non-minority entrants. That was the ultimate criterion: would the candidate after five years stand a chance of competing with all FSOs at that grade level.

Remember, what we were doing in “passing” a person, we were putting them in direct competition for the rest of their career with people who often were far more qualified. Above all, in a society which is not fair and is not just in many ways. Therefore, they need to have a special set of equipment to succeed. We didn't want to send them into “turmoil,” or at least be a party to that. Obviously, society was responsible, the “system” was responsible. This was not necessarily well done, in terms of “on the line” supervisors who knew how to handle this kind of case. They weren't trained to do this. We looked very carefully, and with considerable compassion and understanding, at such applicants..

Q: Do you remember this case in detail?

MORGAN: Very well.

Q: Tell me what exactly resulted in a 69 for her?

MORGAN: One consideration was the fact that she was exceptionally intimidated by us. Much as we tried throughout the entire exam to get her to relax, it was nearly impossible. In fact, you alluded to it before when you asked how we would get people to relax. You do everything that you possibly can. She was always “up tight,” so we weren't sure of who we really were interviewing. Then there was the factual aspect. She couldn't handle many of the substantive and historical questions—even those aimed at the society she knew best. We asked about how she faced drug issues and how drugs affected society, for example. I had probably read a newspaper article that day about a crime in the southeast section of Washington, DC. We asked her how she would react to something like that—things that she had to have feelings about. We were sure that she did have them, but she couldn't express them.

Then we went into hypothetical questions, as we called them. She went for the tree with a sawed off limb, no matter what we put under it to help her. We really wanted her to succeed, because she was so sweet. But sweetness does not get you ahead in diplomacy nor in the competitive nature of the Foreign Service.

Finally, I called her in and broke the news to her. She burst into tears and said, “What will my grandmother say? My grandmother has spent my entire life, pushing me ahead for this day.” Then I cried. It was very hard work.

Q: OK. You only spent one year on the Board of Examiners. Why only one year?

MORGAN: It's traditional. I asked for an extension, because I was as happy as can be. I didn't see anything out there that seemed to be more interesting. However, I was told, “Love to have you, said the boss, but no, this is a one year assignment. Furthermore, you're going on to senior training. Consider yourself honored.” Assignments of this kind of training are always made in a fairly secretive way by a series of panels because senior training is a highly sought after assignment.

Q: Why?

MORGAN: Why does a ticket have a hole in it? It says that it's honorable. Correctly or not, assignment to senior training is a way of congratulating an officer on what he or she has done so far. You have been found to be very competitive. It's like a promotion—except it isn't, of course. Secondly, it's a special experience. It's offered at various places. I went to the Industrial College of the Armed Forces [ICAF], which is located at Fort McNair, along with the National War College, now the National Defense University. Most of these colleges are run by the military, and are really for the colonels and lieutenant colonels —and captains in the Navy, and Air Force and Marines. In the case of the military, an assignment to senior training is essential to future promotion. They especially need to have their tickets punched in the right place. With us in the Foreign Service it is a bit less important. About 10 percent of the class members are civilians. They are drawn from government agencies. Most of the civilians are Civil Service, although there were three or four FSO's at ICAF and five or six FSO's at the National War College. In turn, the Army, Navy, and Air Force all have war colleges. There's also one in Rome—a NATO Defense College.

Q: For our information can you tell us what senior training is and what is ICAF, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces? What is its purpose?

MORGAN: Senior training involves a year of academic work. It is the equivalent of being sent off to Cornell or other universities for area or specialized training. It's a sabbatical, in a sense. You are taken “out of the system” and given a year away from your normal duties. However, because it is so oriented toward the national, defense, foreign affairs issues, clearly a “plus” has been added to your overall skills. So when you come back from senior training, you've had not only a nice, pleasant year—and not necessarily a relaxed one, because you've got a lot of homework and study to do—but you've certainly leaned a lot of

contemporary topics and especially how the U.S. military face their professions and how they look, from their vantage point, at numerous national and international issues.

ICAF, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, was set up—I should remember when it was. I think that it was set up after World War II, when we discovered that we had a new war emerging, a Cold War against the Soviets. The U. S. military and the Joint Chiefs of Staff discovered that, really, we had no rearmament plan and were ill-equipped if we had to prepare for war.. We had most limited ways of turning the economic mobilization machinery back on. Because we did it and did it well with a war going on during World War II, but also at great expense to the nation and “by the seat of our pants” in some cases, it was thought that it would be a good idea to “get our act together” ahead of time. In other words, we should be pro-active this time. It may also have had something to do with the emergency created by the Korean War.

So ICAF was organized, with emphasis on management skills. Modern technology had come in, the computer had been “discovered,” and some of these hot, little management gadgets had come in. I forget some of the “buzz” words, but we spent a lot of time—and it was very useful—on plotting charts as you went through the process. It was like a computer. You produced “Yes” and “No” questions—more or less a schematic way of handling management questions. I know that we had courses in economics and a tremendous number of military command post exercises. We had one exercise that went on for about six months. I signed up for the project dealing with the largest industry in the United States. You know what that is?

Q: Textiles?

MORGAN: No. Medicine. The medical industry. We spent a lot of useful and valuable time on this. We made field trips. By the end of the year we had produced a “show and tell” program which took an entire day to present. This was all “project oriented.”

It was a tremendous experience to work with the military. I remember that on the last day at ICAF a captain in the Navy came up to me and said, “Bill, I just don't understand. I just knew that all State Department people were a bunch of 'wonks,' wore 'funny pants' and did all sorts of funny things. You're not like that. I was pleasantly surprised at this. However, one thing that I still can't reconcile myself to. I know that you're a fine American, you've done well, and you're just as loyal as all of us Navy people. But why don't you wear a flag on your lapel?” I said, “Captain, because I wear it in my heart.”

It is this meeting and binding of souls, but particularly with the military. The State Department often has a hell of a time understanding “the military mind.” I got this so often when I was on the Soviet desk and in USRO, when I recounted to you that these “misunderstandings” which we often had with these “energetic” military people. This ICAF year helped considerably. There is another aspect, and perhaps this is more important. This Navy captain understood that the State Department people weren't a bunch of “commie wonks.”

Q: One question I didn't really ask you was that, during your time in the Board of Examiners, Beirut, and ICAF the Vietnam War was going on. I wonder if you could say whether there were any internal divisions in the Foreign Service and in particular at ICAF, where you were surrounded by military people. What role did the Vietnam War play and how were people talking about it?

MORGAN: We might start in the 1960's in Moscow. There was no question there. In my own mind I had no question that the Vietnam War was an undertaking directed by the Soviet communist world, which the French had “muffed.” With the little knowledge I had and what I read and as I became more familiar with it, the Vietnam War was seen to be a policy carried out by Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. Now, having given my personal views from Moscow in the '60s, I think that those of us in the State Department over the succeeding years would argue, in various ways, about the methodology used [n fighting

this war, especially as it continued on and divided our nation. Nevertheless, there was never a question in my mind about the ultimate reason for our being involved there.

I don't remember ever hearing from any of my colleagues any questions about why we were involved in Vietnam. What we were doing about it at a particular time, how we were seeking truces or routes to peace obviously were always under discussion. Whether Operation “PHOENIX,” for example, based on the bird that arose from the ashes and then devoured, was questioned. That was a big program, and there were questions about the CIA role in all of it. Remember, an awful lot in the Foreign Service had served in Vietnam, or were going to serve there.

I came very close to being assigned as the Soviet specialist in the Embassy in Saigon. Instead, they got my good friend, Roger Kirk, to go instead. He's never forgiven me, I joke!. So the State Department had a big chunk of the action. Those who didn't serve in Vietnam had colleagues and friends. Many with experience there questioned our involvement there, especially after the bombing of Laos. Again, there were questions about techniques or actual, individual policies as they came up.

Jumping from Moscow and the four years in the Department, to Beirut I don't remember our involvement in Vietnam as being a vital issue among the people in our Embassy or other Americans. Certainly, it was controversial. On the other hand, we weren't out there giving lectures on the subject. In a sense, this was a tragedy. Any of us who had any association with France and knew about the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu and what it meant to the French developed a certain feeling for the issue from that perspective. Remember, Lebanon had a special tie to France. I always looked on Vietnam as being a “French-American” problem. Not so much a continuation of an occupation by Westerners, because what the Soviets were intending to do in Indochina was far more of an occupation of that area. The question came up, “Why are we there?” The only answer that ever came out was, “Because of expanding communism.” You saw that all over. You didn't just have

to look at Vietnam. So much of the Middle East conflict had ties with Soviet involvement, often from an anti-American vantage point.

Your question ends up at ICAF, and that's the place for it to end up. ICAF students were very specific on this question because, sure, we talked about it. The final evacuation of the American Embassy in Saigon took place in 1975. To make a sweeping generalization and with my memory failing a little, as I have admitted throughout this interview, I would say that discussions of Vietnam while I was at ICAF were fine, open and honest. No meanness, no bitterness, no remarks like, “You guys in the State Department lost the war.” There was nothing like that, with only a few exceptions. As in all societies there were a few less reasonable people at ICAF. However, they were pretty much isolated. There certainly wasn't any “mood” there which you had to be concerned about.

Oh, one of my State Department fellow students at ICAF might get together with me for lunch, and he might say, “You've never heard what I heard today from this Marine guy...” It was like that—an isolated thing. We were all fellow American professional there to learn as much as possible, and from each other..

I had a lot of office mates. You switched offices four times in the year. So you had four different offices and four different groups of colleagues—four students in an office. You got to know quite well more and more people in the class. I never encountered any hostility. We were good friends and “buddies,” in the normal, very close sense. Never did I encounter anything other than wonderful, detailed, intelligent comments on life in the Foreign Service. Sometimes they were emotional. We had discussions about the fall of Saigon at the end of the war. That is, until the President Ford extended an amnesty to draft dodgers. That really turned almost every single military person at ICAF against him. It worked itself out, but for the first half of the course there was an incredible amount of emotion. You could talk to them about it, but their reaction to the amnesty reflected a high level of feelings, which was understandable. I must say that I had contrary views on the topic, which I kept to myself from the very beginning—for the first couple of days, at least.

I thought that the amnesty was something which had to be done, for the nation's sake, and it took great courage to do it. As the weeks went by, we all could talk about it openly. However, at the beginning, it was incredibly emotional, compared to the fall of Saigon.

Q: Any other fond memories of ICAF?

MORGAN: There are lots of them. They are better because they are more recent. It was a marvelous experience. It brought together elements of the United States Government. It made us proud and more knowledgeable. Yes, I do have a conclusion, and a very practical one. When I left ICAF, I was assigned to the Inspection Corps and then as Deputy Director of the Visa Office. I had never experienced in my life a more direct transfer of learning to a job. In the Inspection Corps, lessons learned at ICAF were immediately and dramatically transferable. I knew more than the other inspectors about contemporary management systems and methodology. I was asked to write the very first “manual” on how to inspect a Consular Section. There had never been a consular-designated officer with consular experience as an Inspector. I came right from ICAF to the Inspection Corps. It was all so much a part of my “thinking” system in that direct transfer It turned out to be the very skills that the Inspection Corps was trying to inculcate into the Corps, the way they were going about inspecting by contemporary analysis—they called it auditing in the business world, as they started doing. I hear it's not the same, now, however.

Then my assignment as the Deputy Director of the Visa Office was equally relevant to these techniques I'd learned at ICAF. VO had just started considering computer technology. It was the very first part of the State Department where they were used in a real-world setting. And I was the Deputy Director primarily responsible for saying, “Go ahead and do it.” That was very important. I understood the value of computers in visa adjudication and control. ICAF had a basic rule—and I recall that one of the professors said this: “The rule of this school is to teach you so that you can 'talk back' to the people in management or sales who are trying to 'con' you. They are trying to sell you a sophisticated airplane when you need a Piper Cub.. They're trying to tell you that the

price is right. You're going to know as much as they do. We want to teach you how to 'talk back' and "talk up" to them, and get the right facts, the ones you need. Call them at their game." And that's exactly what I brought along to VO.

Q: One last question. Where was your family living while you were "bunking up" with the guys at ICAF?

MORGAN: They were right here when I was at Ft. McNair. We lived in Alexandria.

Q: OK. Your tours between 1975 and 1985 (VO, Paris and Montreal) have already been covered in the first interview in 1988. We'll skip now to 1985. You moved from Consul General in Montreal to be the Director of Employee Relations in the Department of State. You got your orders transferring you back to the Department, here in DC. What were your feelings about it? Did you know that this would be your last assignment in the Department of State?

MORGAN: Yes. Well, I wasn't told so, but I knew that it was very likely. I was then 60 years old, and mandatory retirement was 65. Naivete should not by that point be one of by qualities. Without going into a lot of detail, by then I had been introduced to a series of obstacles that you had to cross that were both humiliating and embarrassing. It was extraordinarily questionable whether senior officers, as I was then, would get an additional three-year "extension" every three years to keep you on the rolls. Without spending all of the 45 minutes we have left on the tape to explain it—and it's all been changed slightly by now as a result of various court cases—it was and is very complex. You began to realize that the "system" wanted to get rid of you no matter how well you were performing.

So I had made up my own mind to retire, on my terms, when I left Montreal. I had had a wonderful career. They tried to get me into a couple of Ambassadorial slots, but they were not very interesting to me. So I said, "thank you very much but no thanks." I had more authority, "fun," and power in the Consulate General in Montreal and things that I was going to do than things in Belize or some place out in the Indian Ocean whose name I've

long since forgotten, where I really would not have had much fun or challenge. My son, jokingly I think, said I missed some good Club Med opportunities.

Certainly not in Belize where you were being supervised by an Assistant Secretary of State who should have been in jail. I think that he's still fighting some charge or another, was found guilty but pardoned, because of the things he got involved in. Ollie North and all that He was a kind of Senator Jesse Helms type who was involved in Central America. Well, Belize, here we come! No thank you. So I decided to “pull up and wait” in some job in Washington. After all, we'd been out of Washington for eight years. It was time.

I'd been led very much to believe that I would be getting one of the three Deputy Assistant Secretary of State jobs in the Bureau of Consular Affairs. Certainly, I don't want to get into the emotion and to say, “So many people”—and I don't like to think that I'm one of them —”don't understand how the 'system' works.” Often, when some of these decisions are made, you take them personally, and they're not to be taken personally. However, the person who was then the Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, Diego Asencio, told me that I had a job as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs. He invited me to come down from Montreal for a discussion. We had lunch together, and with our wives, and talked about it. Then, the next thing that you know, the next day, he went off as Ambassador to Brazil! This was a total surprise to me.

Asencio was replaced by Joan Clark. I was led to believe that this assignment still stood —that I would have one of two jobs, either Deputy Director in charge of Visas or in charge of the protection of Americans. Joan came to Montreal about a month later for a visit for one reason or another. It was made clear to me that “we were going to talk about this assignment.” She never did. She had her “hatchet man” talk to me about it. He never even said, “You're not getting this or that job.” This situation went on for a couple of months, and I just didn't understand. Naive?!

A very dear friend, the Executive Director of the Bureau of Consular Affairs, called me and said, “Bill, I don't think So and So made the situation as clear as he probably should have. Well, you're not going to get any job in CA...you're considered 'too senior.'”

But there it was. Once a decision is made, and no more arguments are welcomes—even though I considered it done in an evasive and unprofessional manner—it's made, over. Then I realized that I didn't have a job. I thought, “Well, they're not going to get me to retire now—I'm damned if they will.” Then my good friend the Executive Director of CA said, “Bill, another mutual friend wants you to join him in Personnel. He's the Deputy Assistant Secretary under the Director General, Sam Lupo, and wants you in an Office Director's slot.” I said, “Well, an Office Director job is not so important. After all, my ego would be hurt.” He said, “No, Bill, it's a very good job. It's in Employee Relations.” I said, “What? I've never even heard of Employee Relations.” He said, “Well, let me ask Sam to call you and tell you about it.” Thus, one more example of how assignments are made in State.

It turned out to be a superb job—an incredibly interesting one at that. Not only was it a good job, it was one more insight into the “system.” I knew that I wanted to retire. I saw what was out there in the Department and there was the question of mandatory retirement. After this new assignment I'd be 62 and would have the chance of sweating out one more extension of three years, but for what? And also, the “system” was not as much fun. My wife and I had decided on a lot of things that we were going to do in my retirement. It was time to get on and into our new life while I was still healthy and, hopefully, sane and balanced. And what about those grandchildren that were coming fast and furious?

The job as the Director of Employee Relations itself was more interesting than I ever expected. To approach it from a negative side, if that's the way to put it, Sam Lupo said, “You will do everything that nobody else knows what to do with.” I said, “What do you mean?” He said, “Well, we have our assignments system, we have our promotions system, and we have our management system. We have all of that, under the Director General of the Foreign Service.” This is the personnel system of the Foreign Service

and the Civil Service. Sam continued, “Everything is designed nicely, but we don't know what to do—or the 'system' doesn't know what to do—when some of these other things come up. For example, your first job will be to head the State Department wide “United Fund Campaign.” I think it was called the CFC (Combined Federal Campaign). I said, “You've got to be kidding.” He said, “No, it will take up all of your time for a few months. The Secretary of State, including his reputation in the Cabinet, is deeply involved in it.” And he was! He was “chewed out” by the President and was embarrassed at a cabinet meeting. The President roared at him that the Department of State wasn't giving enough money to the CFC.

So this job involved a lot of the odd ball things, where I was a sort of “Ombudsman.” If somebody on the Grievance Staff didn't know how to handle or couldn't handle something, I would do those things. I was partly involved in the EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) program. Health benefits. All aspects of the health benefits program were handled there. Then, the two largest, established pieces of the work of the office included, first, retirement. That was a big operation, with about 40 Civil Service employees, run by Trudy Wikowski, who was very competent and wasn't about to have a boss, so I was never accepted, by her at least, as her supervisor. I ignored her “strength of character”, at least bureaucratic, and had fun keeping involved in retirement issues, especially as the retirement systems began to change.

Additionally, when it came to retirement policy and practices issues, I was inevitably involved. For example, when a person retires, he starts complaining, “Where's my check, why didn't you do this, and I want to get a divorce.” All of these things are out there, and they are all raised by curmudgeons of a “certain age” who are bitching about what they're not getting, and, above all, complaining that they didn't get a golden watch. They were forced to retire earlier than they really should have and without an Ambassadorship. I felt somewhat cynical and sarcastic about some of these complaints, but they all were made by colleagues, albeit now departed. The Department wants its retirees to be happy. Also, there were a lot of elements working against the retirement program, like Congress and

the Executive Branch, at times. They were trying to “eat away” some of the benefits that you signed up for.

In my first year I was also responsible for the “outplacement” or “job search” program which grew considerably as the forced retirements skyrocketed. We'd had a good week-long orientation program for some years. On to it was added a quite effective job search, resum# writing program that gave a retiree a 90-day free period to leave the Department —in lieu of a golden watch! But that was “extracted” from ER, and made independently responsible to the Director General, frankly, in my mind, because some in the system were worried that we had to “upgrade” the process to make it seem more sensitive to the anger of many of the forced, increased numbers of FSO retirees.

Finally, just before I retired, in fact, we changed the whole retirement system. FERS, the Federal Employees Retirement System, was voted by Congress to replace the old Civil Service and Foreign Service programs... Those who were under the old retirement systems could stay under it. However, we had to set up a computer information system which told people whether it was “wise” to switch to the new system—all that sort of thing.

The other matter which was, by far, the biggest in terms of importance and sensitivity, was Conduct, Discipline and Suitability for the entire Foreign Service. In other words, this involved such issues for officers and staff of the Foreign Service, when they misconducted themselves. This program was under my office. Like the “little, black box” in SOV, we kept the ongoing, very sensitive, very privileged, and very guarded records, which, for obvious reasons, had to protect the integrity of the individuals affected. And also there were zealous lawyers involved who were there to get the best they could for their clients. The Director General and I handled this problem ourselves. Whenever I found myself faced with a problem, I reported directly to him. In turn, I had a deputy, George Haas, a superb Foreign Service Officer who was a specialist in personnel matters, across the board. His “cone” was Administration. He did a superb job. He had one staff person who handled all of the files, phone calls, and so on.

Bear in mind that we were involved in cases of misconduct ranging from the guy who is accused of being a spy for the Soviets in Vienna, down to somebody who was caught with 13 “pink slips” on her desk. A pink slip is what the Marine Guards at a post overseas or security officers in the Department of State hand out when an employee leaves classified information unguarded. But, of course, an officer too often blames his secretary. We came up with discipline recommendations against an established set of criteria covering everything from the slaps on the wrist, suspensions for various lengths of time and up to “termination” (dismissal of an employee). In criminal cases we referenced the problem to the Justice Department. This involved, for example, stealing from the government, money questions, serious violations of law, up to espionage. We had a lawyer-advisor who recommended us most skillfully and carefully on such cases.

That obviously was one of the more interesting and challenging aspects of the job and, in a way, most satisfying. You got through to the person involved. You could really say, “Well, Charley, you really screwed up. We (the Director General's authority and responsibility, under law) are going to put you off the employment rolls for three days. It won't hurt you that much financially, but I hope it hurts you personally and that you understand what is happening.”

On my very last day in the State Department, the day of my retirement, I had a phone call from a very dear friend. We won't name names now. “Bill, this job you have is terribly important. You can't be retiring,” and all of this wonderful “gas” between two old friends. He said, “Bill, while I have you on the phone...”—which is obviously the reason why he called me—”we have this very senior person in our bureau who is going over for some incredibly important negotiations. You've put him off the employment rolls for a week.” I said, “Well, let's get things right. I didn't put him off the rolls for a week. The Director General of the Foreign Service did it.” He said, “Well, I know, Bill, but you have a lot of influence over him, and this guy is very important.” I said, “Now, come on, we know that there is somebody else who can go out and do that job. You could do it yourself.” He said, “Oh, no, I couldn't

do it—I have other things to do." I said, "Look, we can't cancel this suspension for a week, because what he did is very serious." He said, "Well, I don't know the details about this matter. I don't need to, and there is no reason for you to interfere in what has been decided." I said, "OK, let me just say this to you. We're not going to talk about the details, but I will tell you this much. The real bottom line is that he had a bundle of TOP SECRET documents as he was sitting in the barber chair in his neighborhood. Unfortunately, the guy seated in the next barber chair was an FBI agent—just by happenstance. He saw this material. If you and I wanted to help this guy out, we couldn't do it." That was my very last act in the Department.

I left the Department happy. I went away from a career very satisfied that I'd done some things worth while and professional. Another friend of mine who has just retired too early said, "Bill, I'll never forget your advice years ago. 'Never leave mad'." I didn't leave mad. There were few reasons to do so—not many for me at all. Oh, the ego is hurt once in a while, or something that we believe in didn't work. However, I think that, maybe, one of the most important lessons of the Foreign Service is, how do you live with defeats? How do you live with situations in which you lost the argument or you lost funds you need to do the right job? I always prided myself that I could always find the resources needed, somewhere else. That was part of the game. That was what kept me happy. How do you "fight" the System, in the best sense of the word? How do you "use" it to get what you know is right for the nation? When you don't get what you want, well, you get over it. That helped me through it, as it did friends and colleagues, but I certainly didn't leave mad. I was very happy.

Q: Well, I think that that concludes the interview. We can always go back and do some more if necessary. Thank you very much for all five tapes of your time.

MORGAN: We'll have to edit that down.

Q: You really put a very human face on what sounds like a very bureaucratic organization. So thank you very much.

MORGAN: Thank you. I tried.

End of interview